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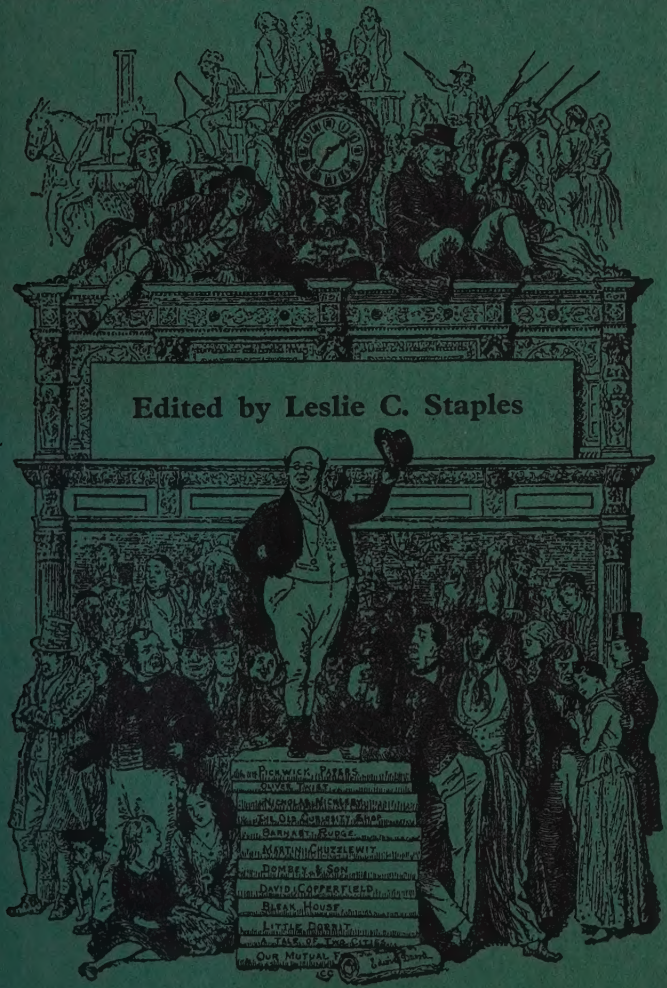

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THE DICKENSIAN

AUTUMN NUMBER

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WHEN FOUND—

June 9th Again on the eve of the anniversary of the death of Dickens, June 9th, a group of members of the Dickens Fellowship gathered at Westminster Abbey to pay homage at the grave-side. Canon Fox and a verger led the little procession from the West Door and a chaplet of scarlet geraniums and laurel was laid on the grave by Mrs. A. Hay Hedley of the Melbourne Branch, and Mr. A. W. Edwards, Hon. Secretary of Headquarters, 1925-1936.

* * * * *

Mr. A. W. Edwards A few weeks later, on July 22nd, Mr. Edwards celebrated his 90th Birthday amid the good wishes of his many friends all over the world. In the following week some of these friends had the happiness of greeting him personally at an afternoon party given in his honour at Dickens House.

* * * * *

Mr. E. J. Mitchell, O.B.E. Our warmest congratulations to Mr. E. J. Mitchell, who has had charge of our finances, and has conserved them so well, since 1947, upon his appointment to the Order of the British Empire. Members everywhere will join with us in wishing him well upon his forthcoming retirement from the Inland Revenue Department.

* * * * *

New Editor for Dickens's Letters The monumental labour of the preparation of the new and comprehensive edition of the Letters of Charles Dickens, which has been in progress since 1949, and which received such a severe blow by the death of the Editor-in-Chief, Mr. Humphry House, shortly after the announcement that the financial responsibility of collecting and preparing the material had been undertaken by the Pilgrim Trust, has been carried forward by Mrs. House and the associated editors. It is now carried a stage further by the appointment of a new Editor, Mr. Graham Hough, Fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge. The editorial committee remains unaltered and it is hoped that the first volume will be in the printers' hands during 1957. It would be much appreciated if readers of *The Dickensian* would communicate with the Editor should they light upon any letters, particularly unpublished ones.

* * * * *

At Southwark The annual Dickens Commemorative Service at Southwark Cathedral was held on Sunday Evening, June 12th, when a large number of London members attended. The Rev. Dr. N. R. Bishop preached the sermon.

Film-strip Dickens has recently been added to the list of film-strips in their series of the " Lives of Famous Men and Women," by Common Ground Ltd. There are 39 subjects illustrated, which are accompanied by appropriate notes. This new strip will undoubtedly prove of great service to teachers and others and is clearly destined for considerable success.

* * * * *

Congratulations Hearty congratulations to our distinguished contemporary *Nineteenth Century Fiction*, upon the appearance of its Tenth Anniversary Number. Commencing as *The Trollopian*, it very quickly abandoned that title and enlarged its scope, and under the editorship of Mr. Bradford A. Booth, of the University of California, has established itself thoroughly by its excellence, and is now indispensable to the student who would keep abreast of Dickens scholarship. No less than three of the seven principal articles in the Anniversary Number, deal with Dickens, two of them by highly esteemed contributors to *The Dickensian*.

* * * * *

Broadstairs The Broadstairs Dickens Festival, founded eighteen years ago, broke new ground this year by blossoming in June in place of the traditional October. Five performances of Gladys Waterer's admirable adaptation of *Bleak House*, first seen there five years ago, formed the core of the Festival, and played to crowded houses. Judging by the attendance at the Dickensian Tea Party in the garden of Bleak House, by the kindness of Mrs. E. Collins, which was the only other event we were able to attend, the Festival was a resounding success.

* * * * *

Bleak House on Broadway *Bleak House*, it is announced, is to be the subject of an important new theatrical production in New York. Sponsored by Paul Gregory, the adaptation is by John Patrick, recipient of the Pulitzer Prize and adaptor of *Tea House of the August Moon*, and the play will be produced by Charles Laughton.

* * * * *

Staple Inn Our frontispiece this quarter shows the restored inner quadrangle of Staple Inn, the restoration of which, after its destruction in 1944, has recently been completed. Readers are referred to our volume for 1946, p. 209, for pictures taken from the same spot before the war and shortly after the bombardment. Dickensians and lovers of London in general, are deeply indebted to the owners of the inn, the Prudential Insurance Co. Ltd., for this wonderful restoration. Now, once more we can visit the home of Mr. Grewgious, and read the familiar " P.J.T. 1747 " over the doorway. Great progress is also being made in the restoration of the Temple, which also suffered grievous damage. After the heart-ache of the dread days of destruction, it is a joy indeed to renew acquaintance with these familiar places, so faithfully and lovingly reproduced by skilled craftsmen. In a few years it will need the expert to tell the new from miraculously spared old.

LESLIE C. STAPLES.

WHO WAS DICKENS'S FRENCH EMPLOYER?

By William J. Carlton

NONE of Dickens's biographers so much as hints at the possibility of his having been employed at any time by a Frenchman, although an intriguing passage in one of his early letters seems to admit of no other interpretation.

On the morning of Friday, 21 November 1834, Dickens awoke in the lodging at 18 Bentinck Street, Marylebone, where he had been living with his parents for nearly two years, to learn that his father had just been arrested by the sheriff's officer. At the instance of a firm of wine merchants, Shaw & Maxwell, to whom he was in debt, John Dickens had been temporarily confined in a "sponging house" in Cursitor Street, Chancery Lane. Charles had some pressing work on hand that morning and was due to take his turn at reporting the debates in the House of Commons at 8 p.m. A few hours before making his way to Westminster he found time to call at the sponging house and see his father. He appears next to have called at Lincoln's Inn to consult his solicitor friend Thomas Mitton, but not finding him there he hastily penned the following note:

"Lincoln's Inn, Friday evening.

"Dear Tom,

"I am over on Cursitor Street. As I go on at 8, and wish particularly to see you before I leave there, will you step over as soon as you return? I have an order in my pocket from my French employer for £5, on an agent in the city who always pays me. They pay as the order notifies 'between 2 and 4,' and I did not get it until 5 to-day. I want to give the Governor some money, and if you will let me have as much as you can on account of the order, or the whole, you can have the check, or let Hartland present it—which you please.

"Believe me, sincerely yours,

"Charles Dickens."[1]

Some four months previously Dickens had joined the reporting staff of the *Morning Chronicle*, but this would not necessarily preclude him from taking a part-time job to supplement his income. A few weeks after his father's arrest he wrote from Furnival's Inn, where he was living in chambers, another brief undated note which should perhaps be read in conjunction with the one quoted above. It was addressed to "A. Fillonneau, Esqre.," and read: "Dear Sir, if you can *conveniently* entrust your smart little Messenger tomorrow night, with the amount due for the last two weeks, you will much oblige me, Dr. Sir, Very truly Yours, Charles Dickens."[2]

Fillonneau is, of course, a French name, albeit an uncommon one, and it had proved troublesome to others long before the Nonesuch editors of Dickens's letters misread it as "Fillowman." "Filloneu," "Fellonoue" and "Fellonone" are a few of the

[1] *The Letters of Charles Dickens* (Nonesuch ed.), 1938, I, 34
[2] *Ibid.*, I, 40.

variations noted in the attempts of Fillonneau's English contemporaries to get it right. An examination of the London directories of the period reveals that in 1836 one André Fillonneau was in business at 75 Old Broad Street and that by March 1840 he had moved a little farther west to 27 Austin Friars. In Robson's London Directory for 1836 he is described as an agent, in Pigot and Co.'s directory of the same year as a merchant, while in Robson's directory for 1841 and 1842 he is called a "French merchant" (*i.e.*, a dealer in French goods). After this date his name disappears from the London directories. Is it too bold a conjecture that André Fillonneau, the French merchant from whom some money was due to Dickens "for the last two weeks" — the implication seems to be that it was in payment for services rendered —was the unnamed French employer mentioned in the note to Mitton?

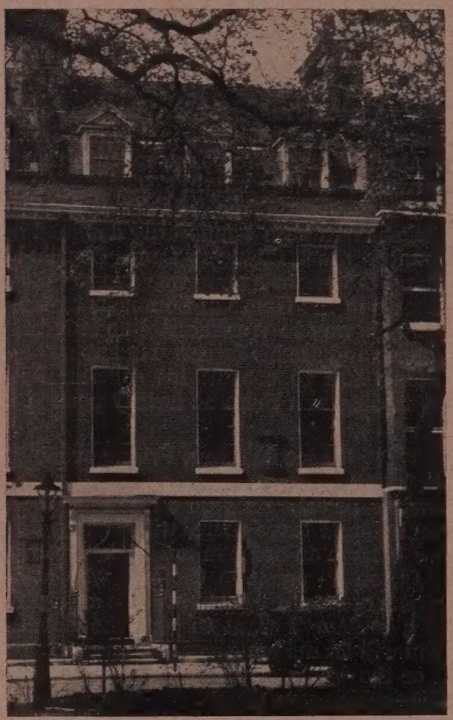


Photo by] [*Brian Greaves*

No. 6 Bloomsbury Square

(South-west corner of the square)

Be that as it may, we shall see that Dickens's relations with the French merchant did not end with this transaction. The parents of Dickens's intimate friend Henry Austin were living from 1832 to 1838 at 6 Bloomsbury Square, which had been the home of the elder Disraeli only a few years before and still stands practically unaltered.[1] Little more than a hundred yards farther west the Hawksmoor church of St. George's, Bloomsbury, was the scene of a double wedding on the morning of 15 July 1837, when Austin's sister Amelia became the wife of André Guillaume Etienne Fillonneau and Austin himself was married immediately after-

[1] A bronze tablet recording that Isaac Disraeli once lived in it was affixed to the house by the Duke of Bedford in 1904.

wards to Letitia Dickens. The officiating clergyman in both cases was the curate, the Rev. Joseph Maude. John Dickens was one of the witnesses at the first ceremony and Letitia's sister Fanny at the second. On the previous day Charles had declined an invitation from W. Harrison Ainsworth on the ground that he had to be present at his sister's wedding breakfast before going to Greenwich for a dinner of the Literary Fund.[1] The breakfast was doubtless the occasion for a meeting of all the families concerned to celebrate the double event, one consequence of which was to make Dickens a brother-in-law of Fillonneau's brother-in-law.

André Fillonneau was described in the register as a merchant, of full age, the son of André Fillonneau, and the residence of both bride and bridegroom was given as Bloomsbury Square. As Fillonneau's name does not appear in the rate books as a householder, it is possible that he was lodging at No. 6 when he met his future wife. The newly-married pair made their home at 14 Regent Square, Gray's Inn Lane, only a short walk from Doughty Street where Dickens was then living. There in due course—on 15 May 1838—a son, Ernest Fillonneau, was born to them, and they appear to have been still there in 1842.

Some three months before the publication of *The Cricket on the Hearth* and only six weeks after the launching of the *Daily News* with Dickens at the helm, the novelist was in correspondence with Amédée Pichot, the French literary critic and director of the *Revue Britannique*, on the subject of Pichot's proposed translation of the book into French. " I shall be delighted to receive your version of the *Cricket*," he wrote on 16 February 1846, " through the hands of the Agent of the *Daily News* in Paris—M. Fillonneau, Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin."[2] No Christian name is here given to the Paris agent (M. is, of course, the usual abbreviation for Monsieur), but an entry in the Paris section of the *Annuaire Général du Commerce* enables us to identify him with the London merchant who had married Amelia Austin nine years earlier. It reads: " Fillonneau (A.), ancien négociant, Chaussée d'Antin, 49bis." A similar entry is printed in each issue of the *Annuaire* up to and including 1851; but in that of 1852 the address is changed to Cité d'Antin, 8, while in the issues for 1854 and 1857 it is Gaillon, 5. Although A. Fillonneau is still shown at 5 Rue Gaillon in the street section of the *Annuaire* for 1858, his name does not appear in the " liste générale " for that year nor is it found in any of the later volumes.

The most complete list now available of the *Daily News* staff at its inception is that given by Thomas Britton, the publisher, in " *The Daily News* " *Jubilee*. He tells us that the City Editor was Mr. Alfred Mallileau, but notes in parentheses that he was uncertain as to the correct spelling of the name.[3] As this list was compiled from memory after an interval of half a century, Britton's vague recollection may well have betrayed him into substituting Alfred Mallileau for André Fillonneau. Another member of the staff, Sir Joseph Archer Crowe, also writing fifty years after the events he recorded, states that his father, Eyre Evans Crowe,

[1] *Letters* (Nonesuch ed.), I, 121-122.
[2] Unpublished letter in the collection of the late Count A. de Suzannet.
[3] Justin McCarthy and Sir John R. Robinson, " *The Daily News* " *Jubilee*, 1896, p. 9.

broke off his connection with the *Morning Chronicle* to join the *Daily News* in January 1846 as leader writer on foreign affairs, and adds: "My stay as a reporter became untenable. I was transferred to the staff of the new journal and sent as an assistant to the Paris correspondent—a Frenchman, whose name now escapes me . . . But from the beginning I had little sympathy with my chief, whose ideas were those of a French pressman, and whose English was as French as his ideas."[1]

If the Frenchman in question was André Fillonneau, it seems likely that Dickens had first offered him the post of City Editor in London and later, when Fillonneau was in the French capital, that of Paris Correspondent. We know that some of the vacancies on the *Daily News* were filled by relatives of Dickens who had previously worked with him or given him employment. His father was in charge of the reporting staff; his father-in-law, George Hogarth, became musical and dramatic critic; his uncle, John Henry Barrow, was the newspaper's correspondent in India; and the appointment of Fillonneau as Paris Correspondent would be a natural corollary. He cannot have held this post for more than a few months, however, as Dr. Dionysius Lardner—"that prince of humbugs" Dickens once called him[2]—succeeded Fillonneau as Paris Correspondent in 1846 and retained the office until it was taken over in the spring of 1849 by Sir Joseph Crowe.[3]

The Battle of Life, written at Lausanne in the summer of 1846, was published in London a few days before Christmas. Dickens was spending the winter in Paris with his family, and Georgina Hogarth (who was with them), recalled some 34 years later that "Madame Fillonneau was, with her husband, settled in Paris at that time and Dickens made her a present of the MS. of the little book as a remembrance of old friendship which had been renewed during the pleasant winter in Paris."[4] More light is thrown on the circumstances in which this gift came to be made in a letter from Georgina to F. G. Kitton. "Charles Dickens," she wrote, "was extremely sensitive as to the possibility of any rubbish being given to the public in the form of 'early writings,' so much so that when a lady (still living), one of his intimate friends who had taken part with him and his sisters in their youthful dramatic entertainments,[5] showed him, with great pride, a MS. which she had preserved of some Play written by him when he was very young, he made a bargain with her by making her a present of a Christmas Book just completed, on condition that she gave up the boyish production to him—which he had the satisfaction of putting into the fire with his own hands."[6] Kitton identified the Christmas book as *The Battle of Life*, adding that "the manuscript has now found its way into a great collection of Dickens's books in Paris."[6]

Dickens was in Paris again on Sunday, 6 January 1856, when he wrote to W. H. Wills about various matters connected with *Household Words*. The letter concluded: "I hear from Mrs.

[1] *Reminiscences of Thirty-five Years of my Life*, 1895, p. 55.
[2] Letter to W. H. Ainsworth, 25 Jan. 1838 (Nonesuch ed., I, 154).
[3] Sir J. A. Crowe's *Reminiscences*, p. 81.
[4] Letter from Georgina Hogarth to F. Harvey, 15 Dec. 1880 (Morgan Library).
[5] Miss Austin played the part of Vespino in the performance of *Clar* at 18 Bentinck Street on 27 April 1833.
[6] F. G. Kitton, *Charles Dickens by Pen and Pencil*, 1889, p. 102 *n.* 2.

Fillonneau that her husband was obliged to leave town suddenly, before he could get your parcel. Consequently he has not brought it, and White's[1] sovereigns—unless you have got them back again—are either lying out of circulation somewhere, or are being spent by somebody else."[2] A fortnight later, however, he reported that White's parcel had arrived safely.[3]

There is yet another allusion to Mrs. Fillonneau in an unpublished letter from Dickens to Georgina Hogarth, written from the office of *All the Year Round* as late as 15 October 1861. "It *was* Mrs. Fillonneau whom I saw the other day," he told her. "Yesterday she and Mrs. Silva[4] were together; and Amelia, when one has that opportunity of comparison, is immensely the better looking of the two. There is something in her face, now that she is grey and quiet, extraordinarily taking."

A copy of the first volume of Dickens's letters, now in the possession of Professor Sylvère Monod, of the University of Caen, bears the inscription: "Amelia Fillonneau with best love and best wishes from Mamie Dickens and Georgina Hogarth, Christmas 1880." That Amelia Fillonneau, "grey and quiet" in 1861, was still living in 1888 or thereabouts, is clear from Georgina Hogarth's letter to Kitton already mentioned, so that the close friendship between the Dickens and Fillonneau families must have extended over a period of more than half a century. By the summer of 1880 Amelia Fillonneau found herself in "very grave pecuniary difficulties" which impelled her to enlist the help of Georgina Hogarth. Through Georgina's instrumentality she sold the MS. of *The Battle of Life* given her by Dickens in 1846 to Francis Harvey, a well-known bookseller of 4 St. James's Street, London. From him it was purchased for £150 by William Wright of Paris, at the sale of the Wright collection in 1899 it was bought by H. Sotheran & Co., soon afterwards passing to the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, where it is now preserved. In the correspondence relating to the sale Georgina refers to Mrs. Fillonneau as "a connection of my late brother-in-law, Mr. Charles Dickens."[5]

Less than a week after the novelist's death a moving tribute to his memory appeared in the *Moniteur des Arts* of 14 June 1870, over the signature of the "directeur-propriétaire" of that journal, Ernest Fillonneau. It was reprinted by Blanchard Jerrold in "A Day with Charles Dickens" (*The Best of All Good Company*, 1871, p. 13*n*.) "Nothing better in its simple strength has been written on the sad subject," wrote Jerrold, "than this by my friend Ernest Fillonneau, who deplores a relation as well as an illustrious companion in letters"; and the eloquent words in which the son of André and Amelia Fillonneau paid homage to the dead writer may fitly conclude this article:

> "Charles Dickens n'est plus! Tout ce qui tient une plume, un pinceau, un crayon ou un ébauchoir, tout ce qui pense, tout ce qui lit, a tressailli de douleur et de surprise en apprenant

[1] Rev. James White (1803-1862), of Bonchurch, Isle of Wight, friend of Dickens and contributor *Household Words*.
[2] *Letters* (Nonesuch ed.) II, 722.
[3] *Ibid.*, II, 731.
[4] Mrs. Silva (*née* Sarah Jane Spencer Austin), the wife of John Joseph Silva, of 40 Regent Square, was Mrs. Fillonneau's sister.
[5] Letter to F. Harvey, 1 June 1880 (Morgan Library). The quotations from Georgina's letters to Harvey are made by permission of the Pierpont Morgan Library.

samedi cette fin prématurée et si imprévue. Tous ses lecteurs, quels qu'ils soient (et il en a dans le monde entier), s'étaient accoûtumés à voir l'écrivain à travers le livre, at à aimer profondément l'homme qui leur donnait tant de jouissances si vives, si charmantes et si variées. Il semble déjà que chacun d'eux ait perdu un ami. Je ne raconterai pas aujourd'hui cette noble carrière, car ma plume tremble entre mes doigts à la pensée de tout ce que nous—sa famille—venons de perdre en Charles Dickens. Il n'y a de place en ce moment que pour le deuil et la consternation. D'homme meilleur, de coeur plus généreux, de caractère plus loyal, d'esprit plus droit et d'ami plus sûr, il n'y en eut jamais. La vie de Dickens a été pure comme sa gloire, et les rayons bienfaisants de l'une et de l'autre forment désormais l'auréole qui éclaire et protège sa mémoire!"[1]

[1] The following translation is offered for the benefit of those who do not read French, although no English rendering can do justice to the original:

"Charles Dickens is no more! A shock of surprise and pain was felt by everyone who holds a pen, a brush, a pencil or a chisel at the news on Saturday of that premature and unlooked-for end. All his readers, whoever they may be (and they are to be found all over the world) had come to know the writer through his books and to love the man who gave them so much enjoyment, so intense, so charming and so varied. Already it seems as though each one of them had lost a friend. To-day I shall not attempt to trace that noble career, for my pen trembles between my fingers at the thought of all that we—his family—have lost in Charles Dickens. There can be no place at this moment for aught but grief and consternation. A better man, a more generous heart, more loyal character and upright mind, a stauncher friend there never was. The life of Dickens was as unsullied as his fame, and the radiant lustre of both constitutes the crown which henceforth illumines and protects his memory!"

A FORGOTTEN BOOK

Extracts from a Talk on *A Child's History of England* given to The Dickens Fellowship in London

By Dennis Birch

(*Continued from page 126*)

II.

Now that we have looked at the background of the book, we can perhaps examine it more critically from perhaps three angles, how far it succeeds as a book, how it reflects the view taken of history in the 'fifties of the last century, and, lastly, what it tells us of Dickens.

One would of course imagine that any writer of a book of this kind would keep a middle of the road attitude towards any subject of a controversial nature, political, religious, or economic, or avoid them altogether. Dickens, however, did not agree with this attitude at all. In few of his books can we see so clearly his various eccentricities, prejudices, likes and dislikes so clearly displayed as in this book.

In particular one must mention that the whole book is coloured by a degree of violent anti-clericalism that seems extraordinarily out of place in a book of this kind. We do of course know that Dickens at one time expressly intended that the book should stifle any "Conservative or High Church notions" that might

be lurking in his eldest son. He wrote[1] to Douglas Jerrold: "I don't know what I should do if he were to get hold of any Conservative or High Church notions; and the best way of guarding against any such horrible result is, I take it, to wring the parrots' necks in his very cradle", hardly perhaps the attitude for an impartial exponent of history.

Mr. and Mrs. John Dickens had, of course, been ordinary Church of England people with no extreme views. The fact that the family, during their stay at Chatham, lived next door to an extremely boring Baptist minister is said to have given the infant novelist an abiding dislike of non-conformity. His dislike was clearly demonstrated in a pamphlet that he wrote as early in his career as 1834, against a bill that had been introduced with a view to prohibiting Sunday recreation.

On the other hand High Church ritual was anathema to him, and he never concealed his active dislike of certain aspects of Roman Catholicism.

One may perhaps sum up the matter by saying that Dickens's attitude was in effect "a plague on both your houses". Hard knocks were dealt out impartially to each side if any excess of sectarian enthusiasm or intolerance were evinced.

St. Dunstan is a villain, Thomas A'Becket is proud and obstinate, Cardinal Pole and Archbishop Laud come in for some severe dressing down.

Although he protests to the contrary, all through his book one is aware of Dickens's belief in the successful gradualism of liberal progress in all fields of endeavour.

There is no nostalgia for the good old days in this book—page after page one is appalled by the horrors of the bad old days. Dickens would never have agreed that we learn anything from history except that we learn nothing from history. Chapter after chapter we are encouraged to admire the Victorian way of life as opposed to the chaos of mediaevalism.

Other famous historical characters lose a certain amount of their prestige when weighed by the Dickensian standards.

Mary Queen of Scots, he tells us, has more sympathy than she deserved—Sir Walter Raleigh was a man of many faults. Even Queen Elizabeth herself does not emerge from the ordeal triumphantly as one might expect. Dickens's praise is less generous than one would anticipate from someone with his robust sense of Patriotism. Coarse, capricious, treacherous, cunning and deceitful are the adjectives that he emphasises. "Too much of her father in her to please me" he sums up.

The episodes which Dickens apparently thought children would enjoy the most were the Reformation and the struggle between Charles the First and Parliament.

These events were examples of two causes which Dickens as a Liberal held especially dear—the struggle against religious intolerance, and the struggle against autocratic despotism.

Any idea that writers of history for children should steer an impartial course and avoid any suspicion of partisanship is quickly dispersed by Dickens's handling of the Stuarts. It is

[1] On May 3rd, 1843.

hard to decide which members of that ill-starved family comes off best—or rather worst. One can probably agree with his estimate of James the First although one is apt to become a little tired of the continual references to that Monarch as " His Sowship".

Charles the First emerges from the ordeal little better than his father, while even Charles the Second is castigated most bitterly and the phrase " the Merry Monarch " is used as an acid term of reproach—in other words to show how oblivious the King was to the obvious evils of his time. It was many years before the " whitewashing " of that Monarch was to begin by the able pens of Mr. Arthur Bryant and other modern historians.

James the Second is, of course, quite beyond the pale—although in his case, from Dickens's point of view, it was more the religion than the man that was to blame. Exaggeration tends to creep in to assist in the Philippic. To say that the arrest of the five members by Charles the First was " the rashest step that ever was taken by mortal man "—may have imprinted the incident on the minds of the listeners or readers but shows a certain insularity in the mind of the historian.

The Parliamentarians on the other hand can do little wrong. Cromwell and Robert Blake in fact emerge from the narrative with more credit than any of the other characters in the whole history, which is an interesting side-light on Dickens's approach to the whole subject.

One must remember that the Civil War loomed extremely large in Dickens's historical horizon. He cannot speak of a strike at Manchester without bringing Hampden's name into it. I think one can say that he and the people of his generation regarded the conflict as a social revolution, and not merely as a political and economic struggle as we do to-day.

There is one point which deserves comment, namely, the prevalence of the horrific element throughout the book. One must be prepared for a fair proportion of slaughter, corpses and bloody frays in any book on early history but Dickens seems to linger over the details a little longer than is necessary, and very much longer than would meet with the approval of those responsible for protecting our children's feelings and susceptibilities to-day.

Dickens makes no bones about his liking for the more macabre aspects of his stories—" Just one or two more horrors " he rather ingenuously remarks at one point, " and then we shall be done ".

Tales of torture and sudden death are not confined to the Tudors and Stuarts. Few pages are devoid of colourful incidents—now we read of a dreadful murder of the Jews (which, Dickens comments, caused great delight to certain savage persons calling themselves Christians)—on another page we learn of the butchering of Saracen prisoners. The Wars of the Roses naturally run with blood and slaughter.

The whole of the sixteenth and seventeenth century portions are studded with scenes on the scaffold—the executioner becomes an old friend he appears so frequently—we have whole paragraphs describing the reactions of various characters to the block.

It is hard to say why this element is so emphasised—it may be that Victorian children liked to feel their blood run a little chilly at times, it may be that the awful end of these great ones of the earth might act as a useful corrective to immodesty and self-conceit, it may be that it is merely a sign of that element of toughness in nineteenth century humour that shows itself so clearly in W. S. Gilbert's less attractive work.

Chapter 37, the last of the book, begins: "I have now arrived at the close of my little history—the events which succeeded the Glorious Revolution would neither be easily related nor easily understood in such a book as this." One can understand that the events succeeding 1837 might have been a little controversial and it might have been a little difficult to explain Peel's attitude to the Corn Laws, or the Oxford Movement, in a way that would appeal to the younger generation. Why however Marlborough's campaigns, the Jacobite Rebellion, or the Seven Years War could not be as easily related as the secret treaties of Charles the Second, or James the Second's relations with the Bishops, is not very clear. In fact it supports the theory that the book was finished in great haste to enable Dickens to hurry off on a holiday with Augustus Egg and the inevitable Mr. Collins. As a matter of interest Mr. Keightley's history continues until the accession of Queen Victoria.

So there we have the complete book, extremely unequal, full of unexpected points of view.

One wonders how far Dickens's attitude to childhood and to his own children was conditioned by his own childhood with its bitter sweet memories, its distresses and hardships.

As far as we know he was an indulgent father in many ways—whether this was due to his natural kindliness or to a feverish desire to give his own children all those things he had lacked himself—it is indeed hard to say.

What then is our final verdict on this forgotten book. I hope you will agree that it throws light on a number of facets of Dickens's character and personality.

It shows us the writer at home, relaxed at ease amongst his family—it is in a way a book not written primarily for publication, that has actually been published, in the same way that in Gilbert White's *Selborne* we seem to be looking over the Vicar's elbow as he writes his letters. One seems to be catching the writer unawares as one does perhaps in Scott's Journal or Trollope's Autobiography.

Anyone who takes the trouble to read this book, will, I am sure, agree that the romantic legends of our early history, those stories that we all remember with wistful pleasure from our childhood, have seldom been retold with such vigour and narrative skill.

The main interest in the book lies however in the fact that any item, however small that helps us to understand and appreciate the many-sided aspects of a great writer such as Dickens, will always be of importance, and, however neglected it may be, it will always be of value to those to whom the study of even the smallest detail relating to this beloved and immortal genius is a perpetual fascination and delight.

THE DEMISE OF *THE STRANGE GENTLEMAN*[1]

By Arthur A. Adrian
Western Reserve University, Ohio

IT is generally known that Dickens had a poor opinion of his early attempts at dramatic authorship. A work bearing his particular disfavor was *The Strange Gentleman*, described as a comic burletta in two acts. Written, according to Dickens's own admission, as a practical joke for his friend, the comedian John Pritt Harley, it opened at St. James's Theatre on September 29th, 1836, and ran for seventy nights. Harley appeared in the leading rôle; and Madame Sala, the mother of George Augustus Sala, played the part of Julia Dobbs. Within a few months of its appearance on the stage, Chapman and Hall published the farce. Two years later, when he sent a copy to W. C. Macready, Dickens declared emphatically, " For heaven's sake don't fancy that I hold *The Strange Gentleman* in any estimation or have a wish upon the subject."[2] In 1843, when there was talk of its revival, he demanded that the piece be forgotten, for it had been written " without the least consideration or regard to reputation." He would not have it repeated for a thousand pounds.[3]

Because the novelist had been intent upon suppressing what he considered a blot upon his successful career, it is not surprising that an unauthorised revival of *The Strange Gentleman* at Charing Cross Theatre in the fall of 1873, roughly three years after his death, aroused the indignation of his executors, Georgina Hogarth and John Forster. The full details of the steps they took to stop the performance have never been made public. Where Dickensians have treated the subject at all, they have dismissed it with a few sentences. J. S. Adair Fitz-Gerald states that the Charing Cross production was terminated at the request of the family.[4] Enlarging upon this brief mention, J. W. T. Ley makes Dickens's children responsible for halting the revival of the farce.[5] Further amplification appears in a later study by F. D. Fawcett, who reports that " Some of Dickens's family approached the theatre lessee . . . and he most handsomely " withdrew the piece.[6]

What actually happened? Fortunately the whole story can now be pieced together from recently discovered letters which were addressed to Frederic Ouvry, solicitor of the Dickens family, immediately after the executors learned of the Charing Cross revival.[7] This correspondence shows that it was Miss Hogarth and Forster, not the children, who took the producer to task.

[1] This study was made possible through a grant-in-aid from the Penrose Fund of the American Philosophical Society.

[2] *The Letters of Charles Dickens*, ed. Walter Dexter (London: Nonesuch Press, 1938), I. 177.

[3] *Ibid.*, I. 548 (Letter to R. H. Horne, November 13th).

[4] In *Dickens and the Drama* (London: Chapman & Hall, Ltd., 1910), p. 58.

[5] See his edition of John Forster's *Life of Charles Dickens* (London: Cecil Palmer, 1928), p. 83, n. 94.

[6] In *Dickens the Dramatist* (London: W. H. Allen, 1952), p. 25.

[7] These letters are preserved in the vault at Farrer and Co., 66 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, and form a part of the Ouvry Papers. I am indebted to Sir Leslie Farrer, K.C.V.O., the owner, for permission to examine and copy these holographs, to Mr. K. J. Fielding for calling my attention to these pages, and to Mr. Henry Charles Dickens, O.B.E., for allowing me to quote from the letters of Georgina Hogarth.

The chronology of events underscores the swiftness and the effectiveness of the measures taken.

On November 19th, 1873, while looking at the theatrical notices in *The Times*, Georgina Hogarth was startled by the following entry:

> Charing Cross.—Charles Dickens—the only farce that was ever written by this great humorist, and which is entitled *The Strange Gentleman* will be revived tonight, and till further notice.

Miss Hogarth clipped this item from her newspaper and sent it to Ouvry, with a note urging immediate action.

The solicitor set to work at once. First he obtained the name of the producer, W. H. C. Nation. At the same time he learned that the advertisement in *The Times*, though only just noticed by Miss Hogarth, had been appearing regularly since October 27th. Then, determined not to overlook any technicalities, he inquired of Chapman and Hall, the publishers of the farce, whether Dickens had disposed of the copyright.

While Ouvry waited for his answer, Forster, with whom Miss Hogarth had also communicated, lost no time in launching his own investigation. On November 19th he wrote to the producer, challenging him on his legal rights to the burletta. The next day's mail brought the following answer from Nation:

> . . . The farce of "The Strange Gentleman" was placed in my hands by Mr. T. L. Greenwood (late partner with Mr. Phelps in the management of Sadler's Wells Theatre), who informed me that before Mr. Dickens's death it had long ceased to be his property, and in fact that this was the only copy extant—I have, however, now once more communicated with him on the subject but of course if he is in error I will withdraw the piece from the bills as soon as I can possibly get another old farce rehearsed.
>
> Hoping that this answer will be satisfactory, as I can assure you that I have not the slightest desire to make use of anything to which I have no right, I remain . . .
>
> P.S. I may add that were you to visit the Theatre I think you would be pleased with the manner in which the farce is acted, though of course this does not affect the question as to whether it ought to be acted at all—[1]

Forster enclosed this letter with the following note (dated November 20th) to Ouvry:

> Here is a cool Epistle, just come, for the Gentleman question G. H. [Georgina Hogarth] will . . . have sent you.
>
> Damages I fear will hardly be gettable—but at any rate the fellow should be made at once to stop the thing.
>
> And what else you think right—but not committing us to certain Expenses—

Meanwhile, Ouvry had written to Miss Hogarth, suggesting that she and Forster had been somewhat peremptory in their insistence that Nation be made to remove the farce from his

[1] This letter and those quoted hereafter are part of the Ouvry Papers.

bill immediately. In her reply (November 22nd) Miss Hogarth admitted that the executors probably stood on uncertain legal grounds in demanding that *The Strange Gentleman* be withdrawn from Charing Cross Theatre forthwith, but she held out hope that the producer might be intimidated:

> . . . He is in a wrong position altogether and could—I should imagine—be easily frightened into withdrawing the piece, without more ado—supposing no penalties were insisted upon.
>
> . . . If you will look at the advertisement of the Charing X Theatre for today *and yesterday*—you will see an alteration in it which is an obvious drawing in of his horns on the part of Mr. Nation. The name of Charles Dickens is no longer there *at all* . . . and this modification seems to me to imply a readiness to come to terms upon a little *mild and judicious* (not peremptory ! !) legal intimidation.

To this suggestion of intimidating Nation, another letter from Forster (November 22nd) to Ouvry lent encouragement:

> The thing is to compel the fellow, not only to withdraw the piece *but to say that it has been prohibited* by the representatives of Mr. Dickens & to say this in the bills, I mean.
>
> I know that the thing did not belong to any theatre manager but to Himself [Dickens]—because I know that he *more than once* refused to let it be acted.
>
> Just put a bold face upon it as if you had every proof you have not—and you will see that he will make *immediate suppression.*

Forster was right. A firm letter from Ouvry (November 22nd) having carried the threat of legal action, Nation yielded to the demands of Dickens's executors. By return mail he wrote the solicitor the following conciliatory note:

> I have just received your letter. In my letter to Mr. John Forster I asked him if he would feel satisfied with my withdrawing the farce " The Strange Gentleman " as soon as I could possibly get another old farce rehearsed but he has not had the courtesy to send a reply—
>
> However, rather than have any litigation about a piece which has proved anything but remunerative, I have, though at much inconvenience to myself, removed it *at once* from the boards.

So effectual had been the action of Dickens's executors and their solicitor that all performances of the farce were cancelled abruptly only four days after Miss Hogarth had seen the theatrical notice. There had not even been time for a reply from Chapman and Hall to Ouvry's question about the copyright. The answer, when it did arrive on November 25th, showed that it could have been of little value earlier, for the publishers' records failed to indicate whether or not Dickens had disposed of the copyright. It was on questionable legal grounds, therefore, that Miss Hogarth, Forster and Ouvry had succeeded in suppressing the unauthorised revival of the farce, which, in accordance with the author's wishes, was thereafter allowed to slip into oblivion. November 22, 1873, may be regarded, therefore, as marking the theatrical demise of *The Strange Gentleman.*

49TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP

BLACKPOOL

THAT a Lancastrian Branch of the Fellowship should play host to the Annual Conference for the third time since the Second World War, speaks volumes for the virility and enthusiasm of Dickensians in the Royal Duchy. Ancient superstitions were markedly trounced by the opening of this most highly successful gathering on Friday, May 13th, when the Mayor, Alderman Will Ogden and Mrs. Ogden, received visitors from all over the country and several from overseas, at the Civic Reception in the Ballroom of the Imperial Hotel, Blackpool. Entertainment, music for dancing, and refreshment were provided on a generous scale by the municipality, and the evening quickly passed as friend greeted friend, renewing happy associations and strengthening bonds for the future.

On the following morning the Business Meeting was held in the same room under the chairmanship of Mrs. D. Stock (Portsmouth), Chairman of the Council, who warmly welcomed everyone in a brief and informal speech of warm cordiality.

After the roll-call of Branches, which demonstrated that Conference exercised as strong an appeal as ever, Mr. John Greaves, Honorary Secretary, read the:

ANNUAL REPORT OF COUNCIL

Every year now sees Golden or Silver Jubilees in one or another of our branches. Since we last met in Conference, Melbourne, Australia; Winnipeg, Canada; and New York, U.S.A., have reached their Golden Anniversary. A few days ago, yet another Canadian branch, Toronto, reached its Golden milestone, Chicago will do so in two days time and one branch in this country, Hull, will reach the mid-century before we meet again in Conference. To all these branches, we are pleased and proud to send our hearty congratulations and good wishes for continued success in the future. Unfortunately we have to report the loss of one of the near London Branches. Hit very badly during the war, the Balham Branch has kept going, with a much depleted membership and after being in existence for the creditable period of over thirty-one years, it has eventually found it necessary to return its Charter. We do express our regret to its officers, who have worked very hard to keep it going and would like to extend to them our gratitude for their efforts on behalf of the Fellowship. On the other hand we are pleased to welcome a new branch—Oakland (St. Albert's College), California, and extend to them our best wishes for a long and successful term. Our total numbers are therefore unaltered and stand at 29 in this country and 35 overseas.

The Council feels that this is the time to emphasise once again the importance of branches, especially throughout this country, taking an active interest in the Fellowship as a whole. It seems hardly necessary to refer to the oft repeated adage that " union

is strength." Representation at Council, which meets now but twice yearly, and at Annual Conference, is most important either by a member of the branch or failing that by an appointed deputy. First and foremost we hope that each branch will send its own delegate and where necessary will consider holding small social functions—Whist Drives, Raffles, etc., to defray his or her expenses. If that is not practicable then we hope you will appoint a deputy under the Rules to represent you and your views. It is the wish of the Council that every branch will give serious consideration to this matter. Let Dickens really be a link between us—not just a matter of mutual interest. Using "mutual" of course in the Dickensian sense.

This has been perhaps one of the peculiarest years in the world of Dickens—a year not marked with any outstanding events, no great books, no great films or otherwise, no great theatrical adaptations, and yet perhaps such a year is best for us in the long run and for our long and steady survival. Interest in Dickens is always there and it only needs a spark to set it off. Our Press friends are, it seems, only interested generally in sensationalism. Read *Pickwick Papers*, it is a living wall, sixty fathoms deep and you are in the story—read it in your own home or study or at your meetings and they have no interest in either you or Dickens.

Thanks to our Auckland Branch in New Zealand we again managed to secure the notice of the Press this year. A copy of David Copperfield used by the ill-fated Antarctic Expedition in 1911 came through many hands to our friends in Auckland and upon its turn here generously presented it to The Dickens House in London, where it was received on behalf of the Trustees by Peter Scott, the famous son of the famous explorer. The High Commissioner for New Zealand kindly made the presentation, on behalf of the Auckland Branch. We are indeed grateful to our Fellow Members in Auckland for their unselfish thought in presenting the book and for this happy opportunity of gaining most favourable publicity for the Fellowship.

The Dickens House, of which we are so justly proud, was re-opened in March, looking very smart, its redecoration completed and ready to welcome its visitors again from all over the world. By this happy occasion a plaque had been fixed on the wall, commemorating the purchase of The Dickens House and its endowment by the Fellowship, with the kind assistance of many good friends. Opportunity too has been taken to record the names of the founders of these two great achievements—B. W. Matz and Walter Dexter. We are proud to see their names on the walls of the house which will stand as a constant memorial to the wonderful work they did for the Fellowship, and as a record of all those who have worked for us since. Whilst referring to The House it seems appropriate to remind you that our efforts to preserve this building have now received official approval. During the year the house was included in a list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest. We immediately took up the case of 2 Doughty Street, which has been scheduled for demolition for some years and we were informed that this house was also being included in the preserved list for that district.

Gads Hill Place has been scheduled in the number. This means that demolition of these Dickens houses would be fought with some difficulty and could not be undertaken without the consent of an official body, presumably the Ministry of Housing Town and Country Planning, which might well result in such delays that any would-be planner may be deterred from pursuing a scheme necessitating such destruction. In this respect we have the Circumlocution Office on our side for once.

Proud we should be in the Fellowship of The Dickensian, devoted entirely, as it is, to the study of the great genius, whose work and memory inspired our foundation. And indeed we enter this year to have the privilege of celebrating the completion of its 50th year of publication. Verbal bouquets more lavishly never sustained the circulation of any book or magazine and there is only one effective way of showing our respect for the memories of its past Editors and our appreciation of the work of its present one, indeed our affection for Mr. Leslie Stroud, a great worker for our cause whose heart is in the successful continuation of the magazine, there is only one effective way—support it in every way we can and encourage our Fellow Members to do likewise.

The Dickens House has more than fulfilled its purpose during the last year as a place of study for the Dickens student and writer of articles and books in the furtherance of education. The application of Dickens to commerce and to art immediately obtainable projects. The following are some of the many subjects studied with particular reference to Dickens: Adult Education, Yorkshire Schools his Letters, The Law and in particular The Poor Law, Furniture, Georgina Hogarth, in preparation for the writing of her life story, Broadstairs in pursuit of the ever elusive solution, Hans Christian Andersen, Christmas numbers of Household Words in the constant search for the application of Dickens to Christmas and its spirit, Rochester Theatre and general matters for suitably illustrating Educational Film Charts. You may be sure we are never lonely at The Dickens House but at such a pace in seeking out the sources of such information demanded by our visitors. In such ways are we responding to the incessant request for knowledge relating to Dickens and fostering, we hope, the study of the man, his works and his influence on the world. In the literary world of Dickens, we regret very sincerely to report the sudden death of Mr. Hampton House who as you know was engaged on the collation of Dickens letters and the proposed publication of the most complete collection ever to be published. His death is a sad blow to this project as well as to the world of Dickens study, but we are pleased to hear that the publication of the Letters is to proceed, the advent of which will be of great import to the Dickens student.

As for our general work during the year, we have dealt with the usual number of enquiries concerning such things as the hereditary of the "Old Curiosity Shop", the alternative endings of *Great Expectations*. We have attended broadcast rehearsals of *Martin Chuzzlewit* when it was put on the air this year, we have assisted commercial companies in giving Dickensian Exhibitions gaining perhaps a modicum of publicity but little else. The only

exception perhaps was when our members, appearing as characters in a large London hotel, to provide Dickensian atmosphere—dressed I may say by our excellent Costume department—partook of a wonderful dinner, during the course of which, they faced a whole lamb roasted and the largest Christmas pudding I have ever seen.

Our charitable efforts have not been overlooked, either in London or in the branches and we have indeed acted within the framework of our aims and objects, in ways which we hope have encouraged the general respect for our Fellowship and have been of benefit to mankind in general.

Such is the broad outline of our stewardship for the past year—nothing spectacular, but we hope useful. We are grateful to our branches for the good they have been doing in the name of Dickens and our Fellowship, and it is our earnest hope that they will all bring their thoughts to bear on joining forces, wherever possible—in forming Regional Groups and getting together among themselves and in particular in whole-heartedly supporting our plea for full representation at our Councils and Annual Conference.

Next year, it will be specially important that we should have good representation—it will be our 50th, and may therefore be termed our Golden Conference. May we appeal to all branches—begin planning now, and let us have the pleasure of bidding welcome to at least one representative from every branch in these islands, and be able to say proudly that at our Golden Conference at Eastbourne next year we have the largest number of branches ever to meet at Conference during the history of the Fellowship.

Audited Accounts for 1954

The Honorary Treasurer, Mr. E. J. Mitchell, reported that with the active assistance of Mr. H. E. Evans of the Manchester Branch, and senior partner of the Honorary Auditors, Messrs. Morris Gregory & Co., the books had been audited for the year ending 31st December, 1954, and were available for inspection by any member. Mr. Mitchell expressed his cordial thanks for these considerable services.

Dealing first with *The Dickensian*, there was an excess of expenditure over receipts of £50, as against £68 during the previous year. The true loss for the year was reduced to £37 by a donation of £13. The receipts, £919, were £53 in advance of those in 1953, due to the excellent sales of Back Numbers, and Advertisements, which amounted to £133, but against this there was a reduction in Sales of £53, and the stock of Back Numbers was reduced by £27. Mr. Mitchell said it was distressing to see this fall in receipts, and appealed, on his own behalf and on behalf of the Honorary Editor, for every effort possible to foster interest in the magazine. The expenditure was £969, £35 more than in 1953, an increase nearly wholly made up by *The Dickensian's* share in the cost of additional clerical assistance which it became imperative for the Fellowship to engage during 1954.

With regard to the accounts of the Dickens Fellowship, the income, at £625, was £8 more than in 1953 and the expenditure, at

£510 was £11 less, notwithstanding the additional clerical assistance just referred to. The excess of income over expenditure, at £115, was £19 better than in 1953. After setting off the loss on *The Dickensian*, the balance on capital account carried forward is £1,221, and the net assets after setting off sundry creditors are £2,784, as against £2,579 at December 31st, 1953. Mr. Mitchell added that a slight increase would be apparent in 1955, owing to very belated arrangements for a pension for the Assistant Secretary. It was small but was as large as could be secured in the circumstances, said Mr. Mitchell, who added that he was certain that the measure would meet with the approval of everyone, and concluded that " These results can be regarded as reasonably satisfactory, and provided they can be maintained the Dickens Fellowship will remain in a solvent state for many years to come.

Finally with regard to the Dickens House, although it does not form a subject for discussion at Conference, Mr. Mitchell reported the financial position is in a very good state, thanks to the income which is being received on the investments of the Walter Dexter Memorial Fund. Maintenance expenses are of course very heavy, but up to the present there has been an excess of income over expenditure.

The accounts will appear in these pages in due course.

Then came the important matter of the next ensuing President. and the Very Rev. W. R. Matthews, K.C.V.O., D.Litt., D.D., Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral, was elected unanimously and with acclamation. The existing Vice-Presidents and Officers were re-elected.

Gratitude and appreciation were expressed in that Messrs. Morris, Gregory & Co., Chartered Accountants, had offered themselves for re-election as Honorary Auditors, and they also were re-elected with acclamation and the Honorary Secretary asked to write cordially thanking them for their past services and for those generously offered again.

The Honorary Editor of *The Dickensian* then gave a brief account of his tour of North American Branches, more fully reported in these pages in the issue for March. He again expressed his hope and belief that the tour did much to cement again the bonds of fellowship between branches on both sides of the Atlantic.

The Honorary Secretary followed with an appeal to all branches to make every endeavour to improve their representation at both Council and Conference, emphasising that only thus could they participate in the conduct of Fellowship affairs and preserve the unity so essential to its welfare. These matters, as referred to in the report of Council, have been constantly before the Executive Committee, which considers them of the very first import, and is determined to do everything in its power to foster them.

The invitation of the Eastbourne Branch to hold the 50th Annual Conference in that town on May 25th-28th, 1956, was most cordially accepted.

The Book for Study for the Season 1956-57 was laid down to be *Barnaby Rudge*, those for the coming season, *The Old Curiosity Shop* and *Master Humphrey's Clock*, having been decided by last year's Conference.

Mr. George Mackrell, Manchester, in the regretted but unavoidable absence of Mr. Leo Mason, reported on the working of the N.W. Regional Group of Branches, the only one which has functioned since the war. It is the aim of Council to persuade branches in other parts of the country to band together in the conviction that the Fellowship as a whole would derive considerable strength and benefit from them. Details were provided of the correspondence between Headquarters and Branches that has so far passed with this aim in view and it hoped that progress will be able to be reported later.

One alteration to the Rules, which is thought by Council to be capable of usefulness in the future was proposed by the Honorary Secretary. It was carried, and Rule V now reads:

> "Societies may, with the approval of the Council, affiliate to the Fellowship on terms and conditions approved by the Council."

Business concluded, Mrs. Jane Bacon, London, proposed a cordial vote of thanks to the Chairman, Mrs. Stock, Portsmouth, for her admirable conduct of the meeting.

* * * * *

The afternoon was devoted to individual action and large parties attended the Circus, the South Shore Pleasure Grounds and other popular attractions of the town.

* * * * *

In the evening one of the most successful Conference Dinners of recent years was held, again in the hospitable and excellent Imperial Hotel, under the Chairmanship of Mrs. Ruth Newell, Chairman of the Blackpool Branch.

After the loyal toast, proposed by the Chairman, the traditional toast to:

"The Immortal Memory of Charles Dickens"

was proposed by Mr. REX POGSON, B.A., who said:

The greatest writers are not so much figures in literature as a whole literature in themselves, and they gather round themselves another vast literature of comment and criticism, until everything that can be said has been well said many times. That was my first reaction on receiving your invitation—and let me say here how much I appreciate the honour you have done me. It is another quality of the greatest writers, and it is peculiarly true of Dickens, that they are both universal and intimate; the whole world is their province, and yet they have something very personal to say to each individual reader, so that it can be said that all of us feel we can speak of "My Dickens." That must be my justification for selecting and discussing two points, or rather two aspects of the same point, which for me lead to the heart of the greatness of Dickens.

Let me confess at once that I am addicted to the harmless pastime of literary topography. I can derive great pleasure from standing on the cliff at Watchet and trying to see through Coleridge's eyes the start of that imaginary voyage so incomparably enshrined in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, or to ruminate in the house at Chawton where Miss Austen created the

Bennet family, Emma Woodhouse and of course Mr. Collins. And so it is with Dickens, though here we are provided with guides on our travels, particularly those useful books by Walter Dexter. And so I can sympathise with the inhabitants of Ipswich and Sudbury in their struggle for Eatanswill, and of Alderbury and Amesbury—not forgetting Winterslow—in their struggle for Mr. Pecksniff. Coming nearer home, one may wonder how far Coketown can be identified with Preston, and turning from fiction to fact, to see in the mind's eye those two idle apprentices at the King's Head in Lancaster. It ought surely to have been Collins and not Dickens who slept in the bedroom haunted by that other "Woman in White", the ghost of the bride murdered on her honeymoon. It is amusing to recall that this grisly event was commemorated by serving wedding cake to the hotel guests for dinner. Nearest home of all, it has seemed to me that Dickens must have had this town in mind when he fashioned Stephen Blackpool—simple, honest, hardworking, with—if my memory serves—a hard-looking head. Obviously he was thinking of somewhere far less respectable when he created Mrs. Blackpool.

The astonishing thing, however, is that there are so few doubts about Dickens's topography. His eye for external things was photographically exact. One of the most striking tributes to this is contained in some lectures given by the late Sir William Holdsworth at Yale University in 1927 when he stated, from his unrivalled knowledge of legal history, that the description of courts, officials and legal procedure contained in *The Pickwick Papers* and *Bleak House* make those books primary sources for the legal history of the period, a remarkable tribute to a novelist. We could pile up sufficient evidence to delude ourselves that Dickens is a literary realist.

But it would be a delusion. If Dickens were nothing more than a superb verbal photographer, I doubt whether we would be honouring his memory to-night. No one knew better than Dickens that literature is an art, and that it is the job of the artist, not merely to indicate to us the things we can discover for ourselves, but to provide a window through which we can see, with creative eyes, the things which otherwise would be hidden from us. We say that Dickens's characters are lifelike, but they are larger than life; they seem to be known to us in ordinary circumstances only because we are using the author's imagination to help us. Obviously Dickens, with his reporter's eye and flair for detail, noted tricks of speech and manner for future use, but before they reach us on the printed page these characters have passed through the crucible of the writer's imagination, and they emerge fuller and richer. We must remind ourselves constantly that each character is the result of a creative act of the imagination, and when we remember the hundreds of characters, never duplicated, we have some insight into the genius of Dickens.

But Dickens did something more than this, and it is the most astonishing thing of all. He took these two elements—the realism of his setting and the creativeness of his characterisation and he brought them together in an indivisible whole, thereby strengthening both parts. It enabled him to be topical and universal at the

same time. Often we speak of Dickens as a prophet, teacher and social reformer, and he was these things, but everything was achieved by literary means. For every person who can be roused by an abstract principle, twenty can be roused by a human being in distress. Dickens did not lay down a programme against abuses; he created characters, made us like them and care what happened to them, and then showed them to us as the victims of injustice. His reforming zeal emerges naturally from the sequence of his stories and the actions of his characters. That is why the Victorian thesis novelists, Reade, Kingsley and the social novels of Collins, are largely forgotten whilst Dickens lives on. On the realistic plane the social end was served; on the imaginative plane the characters, though they dressed like Victorians and were first located then, belong to no age, but are eternally alive in the endless world of the imagination.

We are here close to the heart of the matter. One can sympathise with the often-used opinion that Dickens is the novelist of the ordinary man and woman, but in a sense it is misleading. For Dickens there were no ordinary men and women—it is a condition of our humanity that we are exceptional. The rediscovery of Dickens was not merely the importance of the individual personality but the absolute uniqueness of the individual personality. It was an enormously important assertion in an age when men and women were becoming mere units in an industrial society. I have called it a rediscovery because I believe it is at this point that Dickens is linked with the great Christian tradition. It is not, I hope, irreverent to see in this belief, by implication, a restatement of the Gospel teaching that each man and woman, in a real and special sense, is a child of God. So long as we care about such fundamental truths, so long as we care about the individual human personality, so long shall we remember and honour the name of Charles Dickens.

The toast of the Dickens Fellowship was proposed by Madame Cleator, L.R.A.M., L.T.C.L., M.R.S.T., Chairman of the Blackpool Branch, in a highly successful speech in which she reduced her audience to helpless laughter in a humorous and warm-hearted appeal for the idea of Regional Groups of branches. Response was made by Miss L. McKenzie of Wellington, New Zealand. The Mayor and Corporation of Blackpool were toasted by Mr. W. A. MacGregor, London, in a speech cordially acknowledging the lavish hospitality the Fellowship had received at their hands during Conference, and the response was made by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor A. Waterhouse. The toast of "The Visitors" fell to Miss Alys Myers, M.J.I., to which reply was made by Professor Evelyn H. Scholl, Ph.D. (Michigan). The toast of "The Chairman," by Mr. Maurice Wilson, Chairman of the N.W. Regional Group, and Mrs. Ruth Newell's reply, brought the evening to a conclusion.

* * * * *

Sunday morning saw the company assembled for Morning Service at St. Paul's Church, where the Vicar, the Rev. J. H. Dawson, preached the sermon in which he expressed the opinion that one of the problems of our day which would have commended

itself most strongly to Dickens, was the infant mortality on our highways.

The afternoon was again spent at leisure and the evening was occupied by a social gathering in the Imperial Hotel, at the invitation of the Blackpool Branch. A programme of entertainment was provided by members and visitors and refreshments served.

The final day of the gathering was devoted to a coach excursion to the Lake District. The keen wind of the previous days abated, the sun shone brightly all day out of a clear sky on those beautiful lakes, gay in their new Spring verdure, and surmounted by snow-capped mountains. It was a perfect day. After Windermere, a halt was made at Wordsworth's Dove Cottage and lunch was taken at Grasmere. Proceeding to Keswick, there was another halt, enabling some to take a cruise on Derwentwater, before Tea at the Royal Oak Hotel, with its many memories of the Lake poets, recalled to the company by Sir Percy M. Hope. Returning by way of the John Peel country and the Kirkstone Pass, Blackpool was not reached until a late hour.

So ended yet another of these gatherings that enable so many members to renew, year by year, so many happy associations. Without doubt they provide the very stuff of fellowship. The Blackpool Branch is to be warmly congratulated and cordially thanked for the thought, care, and organisation put into the Conference, and there are three ladies whom we should specially like to name in this connection, Mrs. Ruth Newell, President; Madame Cleator, Chairman; and Mrs. N. Brammer, Honorary Secretary. They may be justly proud of their achievement which is most deeply appreciated.

PLAYS FROM THE CHRISTMAS NUMBERS OF *HOUSEHOLD WORDS*

By Malcolm Morley

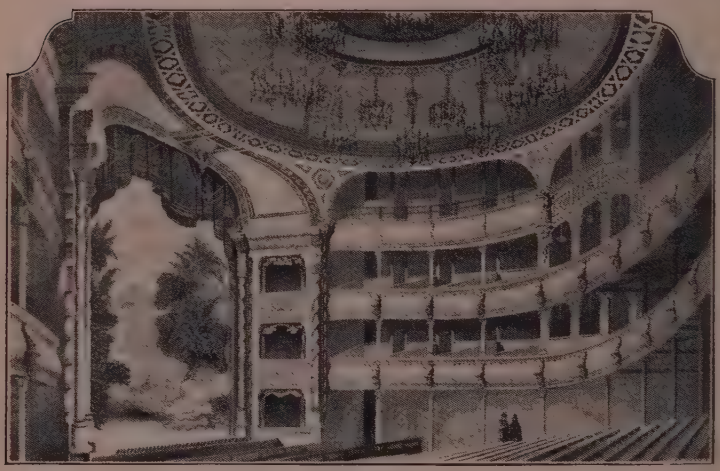
(*Continued from p.* 132)

II.

In "Two Views of a Cheap Theatre," *The Uncommercial Traveller*, Dickens tells of a visit to the Britannia Theatre in Hoxton. His description of that huge playhouse was decidely in its favour. He wrote:

> "The object of my journey was theatrical. And . . . within half an hour I was in an immense theatre, capable of holding nearly five thousand people. What Theatre? Her Majesty's? Far better. Royal Italian Opera? Far better. Infinitely superior to the latter for hearing in; infinitely superior to both for seeing in. To every part of this Theatre, spacious fire-proof ways of ingress and egress. For every part of it convenient

places of refreshment and retiring rooms. Everything to eat and drink carefully supervised as to quality, and sold at an appointed price: respectable female attendants ready for the commonest women in the audiences; a general air of consideration, decorum, and supervision, most commendable; an unquestionably humanising influence in all the social arrangements of the place. Surely a dear Theatre then? Because there were in London (not very long ago) Theatres with entrance-prices up to half a guinea a head, whose arrangements were not half so civilised. Surely, therefore, a dear Theatre? Not very dear. A gallery at threepence, another gallery at fourpence, a



The Britannia Theatre

From the Gerald Forsyth Theatrical Collection

pit at sixpence, boxes and pit-stalls at a shilling, and a few private boxes at half-a-crown."

The Britannia for its part was in favour of Dickens, and dramas from most of his novels were given there. Stories in the Extra Numbers of *Household Words* were successively produced in this remarkable and unique theatre, the most beloved of any in London during the half century of its hey-day.

Christmas, 1856, brought an Extra Number of *Household Words* devoted to *The Wreck of the Golden Mary*, a story divided into three parts; "The Wreck," "The Beguilement in the Boats" and "The Deliverance." The first part written by Dickens (with some additional pages by Collins) was graphic, an account of a sailing ship rounding Cape Horn and of her striking an iceberg. Crew and a unique assortment of passengers are crowded into two boats upon the open sea. The second part consisted of a number of tales told to each other by the occupants of the boats to beguile the weary days and hours of waiting and hoping for rescue. It

was a nest of anecdotes contributed by different authors. In Part Three Wilkie Collins concluded the adventure and related how, at long last, the two boats were providentially picked up by a brigantine.

Five dramatisations of the story appeared in the New Year. The spectacle of a ship being struck by an iceberg, causing the people thereon to bundle into boats which were to float upon a canvas ocean bounded only by the walls of the theatre, was in each case the outstanding event in the production. Established playhouses in those days were stacked with scenery. A short time previously *The Sea of Ice*, a popular drama from the French, had been seen at all the Minor theatres. Icebergs and ships had been specially painted for this play and were standing idle, waiting to be brought out again, Crummles fashion. Here then was an opportunity to repeat the effects that had previously delighted patrons.

The Wreck of the Golden Mary at the Britannia on January 17th, 1857, put together by William Seaman, was given with the pantomime of *Hush-a-Bye Baby*, and ran for three weeks. The raging storm with all possible stage effects was, of course, the great feature of the drama and the Stage Manager strove every evening that its fury should not abate. There was a green room story current that at the early performances the angry sea had waves which barely moved. The waves were made by unseen boys moving their bodies up and down as they crawled along under the painted canvas stretching across the stage. They were found to be moving only at mill-pond pace. The vigilant Stage Manager told the boys they must be more active in their wave-making. Through their spokesman the boys replied that, as they were only being paid twopence a night, they only gave "tuppenny" waves. If "thrupenny" waves were wanted they must be paid accordingly. For the remainder of the run the sea had waves to the value of threepence. So the pictorial dangers of the people in the boats was enhanced. In the play several additions were made to the original story. New characters and new incidents were introduced—all very far from Dickens. There was a ticket-of-leave man, Bozzywinkle, who, incited by somebody named Harry Lester, robs Dick Tarrant in Liverpool, leaving the young man penniless and forced to take ship as one of the crew of the Golden Mary. Another added person was Kitty Gridiron, the sweetheart of John Steadiman, first mate and full-time hero.

The adaptation at the Victoria on January 19th, called *The Golden Mary; or, The Fatal Iceberg*, included the characters invented by Seaman and was presumably his play. As at the Britannia it shared the bill with a pantomime, in this case *Harlequin the Conqueror*. Dissolving views were thrown on the backcloth to represent the turbulent ocean. This magic-lantern effect created an illusion which to a certain extent anticipated the projected scenery of modern stage craft. In the cast at the Victoria were T. E. Mills as Captain Ravender, Frederick Byefield as Dick Tarrant, W. H. Pitt as Steadiman, J. Howard as the crazed Rarx and Mrs. Henry Vining as Willie Lindsey, the boy determined that his wraith should visit his mother in Scotland.

The superfluous passenger Bozzywinkle was played by Charles Rice, actor-dramatist, whose stage version of Dumas's *Three Musketeers* was the first to be given in England.

On January 26th, a week after the production in the Waterloo Road, two dramas named *The Wreck of the Golden Mary* came to town, one at the Standard, the other at the City of London. A fortnight later, on February 9th, a newer dramatisation with the same title was seen at the Grecian. At the Marylebone on July 19th, 1860, there appeared *The Child's Prayer*, by H. Young, only remotely an adaptation, although it occasionally to bear the subtitle of *The Wreck of the Golden Mary*. It was a piece carpentered to suit the precocious talent of an infant prodigy, little Lilia Ross, who may have exhausted herself, if not the audience, as a dying child.

The Christmas Number of *Household Words*, for 1857, was solely occupied with *The Perils of Certain English Prisoners* of which the first and third of its three chapters were written by Dickens. The second chapter was the work of Wilkie Collins. Chapter One introduces a number of English people on the Island of Silver Store in the Caribees. A false message splits up their number and the minority are taken prisoners by a pirate gang under the leadership of the strutting guitar-playing Pedro Mendez. In Chapter Two they are marched into the interior of the Island and there imprisoned in a ruined palace belonging to an earlier civilisation. Chapter Three sees their escape down the river on self-constructed rafts. It is literature of a boyish appeal with incidents in the mould of the Aldine Library. A few weeks after publication several dramatisations were staged in the outlying London theatres. The first two were given at the Britannia and the Victoria both on the same night, Monday, January 18th, 1858. The Britannia adopted the clumsy name attached to the story and the piece was perhaps manufactured by C. H. Hazlewood, resident playwright to that house. The version at the Victoria was contrived by Henry Young and had for title *Silver Store Island; or, Pedro Mendez the South American Pirate*. Here J. H. Rickard, a major actor in the Minor Theatres, acted Mendez in a manner as colourful as the scenery painted by James Gates. W. H. Pitt was Gill Davis, George Yarnold thè comically meticulous Mr. Commissioner Pordage and Samuel Sawford the traitorous half-caste, Christian George King. Scenery was also to the fore at the Standard where the adaptation of William Travers, *The Island of Silver Store; or, The Pirate of the Caribees*, was given on the following February 8th with James Johnstone as an amusing and fantastic Mendez. The play was successful enough to warrant a revival at the Marylebone on November 22nd, 1860.

Nearer the West End was *Silver Store Island; or, The British Flag of the South American Pirate*, by F. Fox Cooper on February 15th, 1858, at the Strand, a playhouse much too small to allow of scenic effects and where none were attempted. The play began in Prologue fashion with Mary Anne Victor as *The Genius of Fiction* followed by three acts of Cooper's mixture, swamping what little there was left of Dickens in the story. A mannered comedian, Van Buren, was to have played the bantam-weight Pirate Captain but at the last moment the part was taken by

W. H. Swanborough, the lessee of the theatre. Others in the cast were H. J. Turner as Pordage and George Bolton as Gill Davis. Yet another adaptation seen in London early in 1858 was *The Pirate Chief; or, The Black Flag and the Treacherous Sambo*, at the boisterous Bower Saloon.

Away from London was a dramatisation by Walter Baynham given at the Theatre Royal, Brighton, on February 1st of that year with the title of *The Island of Silver Store; or, The Prisoners' Perils*. Mr. Commissioner Pordage was played by H. Nye Chart for many years Manager of the theatre.

The last *Household Words* Christmas Number was in 1858 and like some of the previous Annuals it was a compendium of stories. Under the embracing description of *A House to Let* these stories expounded the reasons why the house in question remained untenanted. As usual the items were contributed by various authors. *Going into Society* is the only one of them identified with Dickens although he completed the history by telling how the place was bought by the interested Sophonisba.

Alone of the individual stories *The Manchester Marriage* written by Mrs. Gaskell found its way to the stage. At the faithful Standard an adaptation by F. G. Cheatham was produced on February 7th, 1859. Actually the play was a fusing of two tales, *The Manchester Marriage* and *Going into Society*. The result was ineffective and the intrusions of Chops the Dwarf, played by G. B. Bigwood, were completely irrelevant to the drama of innocent bigamy from Mrs. Gaskell. Alice, thinking her husband Frank has perished at sea, marries the big-hearted Openshaw. Frank returns and discovers Alice is happy and a mother. He sadly leaves without disclosing himself to her. Later that evening he takes his own life. Making entrances and exits between the emotional climaxes was Chops to talk about himself and society. Nora, the devoted housemaid, provided Mrs. R. Honner with a sympathetic rôle. She, be it remembered, was an Oliver Twist twenty years before.

In the eighteen-seventies a lurid melodrama *This House to Let*, by William Travers, went the round of the suburban and provincial theatres. It was in no way derived from the publication which, like the two previous Christmas Numbers, engendered no plays listed in America. But Dickens in his readings overseas most likely voiced on that Continent the story of the Dwarf who experienced *Going into Society*.

Apart from the stories in the Christmas Numbers there was a serial by Dickens and Wilkie Collins, *The Lazy Tour of Two Idle Apprentices* which ran in *Household Words* from October 3rd to 29th, 1857. Two macabre tales were introduced into the contribution; one about a traveller occupying a room at an Inn where a corpse was installed and the other about the ghost of a hanged man who tells the details of his crime. The first of these tales reached the stage at the Hart House Theatre in Toronto, Canada, March 30th, 1935, in a dramatisation by K. W. Edge. They play, called *To the Dead Man*, wandered considerably from the original and ended on a note of query. Was the experience of the traveller, Arthur Holliday, real, or was it a dream? Horatio Purdy played the traveller in this grim and dramatic offering.

Bruce Castle, Tottenham

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BRUCE CASTLE: A SCHOOL DICKENS ADMIRED

By P. A. W. Collins

Warden of Vaughan College, Leicester.

DICKENS wrote about many schools in his novels, but it is the bad ones that stick in the memory; his "good" schools are fewer and less impressive. The only prominent good school, in the novels, is Dr. Strong's in *David Copperfield*, and the description of this school has been dismissed by George Orwell, in his vigorous essay on Dickens, as betraying by its "woolly vagueness" its creator's "utter lack of any educational theory."[1] Orwell was exaggerating; but certainly this passage in *David Copperfield* lacks the verve and particularity which inform, say, the description of Mr. Creakle's school in the same book. And what kind of existing school had Dickens in mind, when inventing this one? Hughes, in his *Dickens as an Educator*, asserted that David here "met with the best conditions of good training yet revealed by the 'new education'", and by "new education" Hughes (who was a Froebelian) meant what is now referred to as "progressive

[1] George Orwell, *Critical Essays*, 1940, p. 20.

schooling." Dr. Mack, on the other hand, is sure that Dickens here "had a Public School as reformed by Arnold in mind."[1] That Dickens originally meant to make clearer the contrast between Creakle's and Strong's, as examples of old and new (or reformed) schools, is perhaps implied by a sentence he cut in proof. "I am a determined character," Creakle (we all remember) says in Chapter VI; in the MS., he had preceded this sinister statement by a more philosophical one—"I belong to the old school." The difference between these two schools, as Dickens presents them, is more moral than intellectual—"as different as good is from evil." Dr. Strong is a kindlier man, he trusts his boys more than Creakle does, they respond by learning "with a good heart," and they enjoy "plenty of liberty" without abusing the opportunities this gives them. The qualities Dickens presents here for our admiration are, of course, what we would infer from his various satirical pictures, more vividly done, of bad schools which lack them.

The inadequacies of Dickens's fictional presentation of a "good" school make it the more interesting to notice his commendation of an actual school such as his David Copperfield might have attended, or to which Dickens could have sent his own sons. His eldest boy, Charley, went to Eton —a fact which shocked Orwell, who was not the loyalest of Old Etonians —and, before that, to another quite conventional school for boys of such families, King's College School. But, wrote Dickens to Forster in 1846, "Of my own will I would not send him to King's-college at all, but to Bruce-castle instead. I suppose, however, Miss Coutts is best."[2] (Miss Coutts was paying for Charley's education.) A year or so before, Dickens had described the system at Bruce Castle School, in a letter to Macready, as "a perfectly admirable one; the only recognition of education as a broad system of moral and intellectual philosophy, that I have ever seen in practice."[3] The present essay is an attempt to elucidate the significance of these favourable references to Bruce Castle.

How and when Dickens learned about Bruce Castle, how much he knew about it, how literally one can take his words "seen in practice"—these are questions to which, unfortunately, it seems impossible to give definite answers. The Nonesuch *Letters* prints two letters from Dickens to Arthur Hill (1798-1885), the Headmaster of Bruce Castle, Tottenham. In the first of these, dated 24th February 1846, Dickens promises to forward to the managers of the *Daily News* a letter from Hill "and its enclosure"; more significantly for us, he goes on to express regret at being unable to attend Hill's "interesting party—I am glad the suffering lady recovered—but not surprised, for what is Fame to a Polka."[4] This jaunty reference to "the suffering lady" and her polka suggests some personal acquaintance between Hill and Dickens, though more conclusive evidence seems lacking. The other letter, many years later, thanks Hill for sending him a copy of the

[1] James L. Hughes, *Dickens as an Educator*, 1914, p. 224; Edward C. Mack, *Public Schools and British Opinion 1780 to 1860*, 1938, p. 386n. See also S. J. Rust, "The Education of David Copperfield," *The Dickensian*, XXXI, 1935, pp. 46-50.
[2] 30th November 1846: John Forster, *The Life of Charles Dickens*, ed. J. W. T. Ley, 1928, p. 446.
[3] 17th August 1845: *The Letters of Charles Dickens*, ed. Walter Dexter, 1938, i, 695.
[4] *Ibid.*, i, 737.

Brucian (the school magazine), and asks him to thank "the young friend who remembers me in the volume so much to my true gratification"; it concludes with good wishes for all the boys, who "will long bear the best testimony that can be rendered to the merits of your wholesome system."[1] This letter, again, is silent on how, and how well, Dickens knew about the school and its "wholesome system." There are many possible links between Dickens and Bruce Castle: for instance, Macready was thinking of sending his son there, and Dickens, in the letter to Macready that has already been quoted, refers to the fact that "Howitt's two boys and Jerrold's one" were about to go there, and Dickens was, of course, friendly with Howitt and Jerrold. Many other friends and acquaintances of Dickens were interested in Bruce Castle,[2] and might have introduced him to it—and one should add that Bruce Castle was, as a Tottenham local historian proudly claims, "for many years . . . considered to be the largest and best private school in England."[3] It is a school Dickens might have been expected to hear about somehow, some time.

Dickens was not the only prominent admirer of Bruce Castle and its system, but his commendation of it is interesting evidence of his readiness to respond to the genuinely original and experimental. Orwell remarks on the schools which Dickens did not like, and asks, "What, then, *does* he want? As always, what he appears to want is a moralised version of the existing thing . . ." (he instances Dr. Strong's). But Bruce Castle was not like this; it was, as a recent educational historian has claimed, the most interesting experiment among the private schools of its age in England.[4] It represented, in its time, what Abbotsholme at the end of the century, and Dartington Hall more recently, have done. With the history of Bruce Castle, the student of Dickens need not concern himself, but a little must be said about its origins.

Bruce Castle was the successor of a school in Birmingham. Thomas Wright Hill (1763-1851) was a man of very original mind and fervent principles, but muddled, eccentric and inefficient: he had in 1803 founded Hill Top School, Birmingham, which was the germ of Bruce Castle. He was the father of five very remarkable sons, of whom the third, Rowland, is the best-remembered (for his Post Office activities), and the fourth, Arthur, is the most important to us, for he spent his life as Headmaster of Bruce Castle, after all his brothers had taught there awhile and then gone off to other occupations.[5] It was Rowland whose inventive mind and genius for organisation brought fame to the family school. He virtually took it over from his father while still a youth, moved it to Hazelwood, Birmingham, in 1819, worked out in detail the new "Hazelwood system," published it to the world, and then opened

[1] 8th October 1859, *Letters*, iii, 125. The June 1858 issue of *The Brucian* contains an article, "Dickens," defending his later novels against the common cry that they were inferior to the earlier ones.

[2] E.g., Dr. Southwood Smith, Lord John Russell, M.D. Hill (Arthur Hill's brother), Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth, and William Hone.

[3] Fred Fisk, *The History of the Ancient Parish of Tottenham*, Second Series, 1923, p. 169.

[4] S. J. Curtis, *History of Education in Great Britain*, 1948, p. 70. For another instance of Dickens's interest in the "new education," see P. A. W. Collins, "A Note on Dickens and Froebel," *The National Froebel Foundation Bulletin*, No. 94, June 1955, pp. 15-18.

[5] The others were Matthew Davenport, the eldest, Recorder of Birmingham, and reformer of of the criminal law; Edwin, an inventor, also active in criminal reform; and Frederick, also active in criminal and educational reform, and in Post Office administration. A sixth son, William, died young.

a London " branch " at Bruce Castle in 1827. After 1833, Hazelwood was closed down, and Rowland left teaching: Arthur remained in charge until his retirement in 1868, when he was succeeded by his son and former assistant George Birkbeck Hill (the Johnsonian scholar). G. B. Hill had to retire through ill-health in 1877; the school passed out of the family, and finally ceased in 1891. The building—a handsome Jacobean one—is now a museum.[1]

" It was the height of my ambition," wrote Rowland Hill in his Journal, " to establish a school for the upper and middle classes wherein the science and practice of education might be improved to such a degree as to show that it is now in its infancy."[2] He and his brothers knew something of some " progressive " educationalists of the age—the Edgeworths, Pestalozzi, de Fellenberg—but most of the system which they evolved, under Rowland's leadership, was original. They learned as they went: Rowland later described his teaching career as a series of experiments. Already, at twenty-five, he was confessing that " we retain hardly a single opinion relating to any part of our profession which we held in early life. One by one we have surrendered them all to the forces of experience."[3] Their system is best known through a substantial book, devised by Rowland but phrased by his eldest brother Matthew, with some help from Arthur, published in 1822 and with many amendments in 1825—*Public Education: Plans for the Government and Liberal Education of Boys in Large Numbers, as practised at Hazelwood School*. This book was widely discussed, and made Hazelwood world-famous overnight. This was the Hills' school's finest hour: de Quincey and Southwood Smith and Jeffrey and others reviewed *Public Education* with great respect, illustrious visitors from the metropolis and from overseas thronged Hazelwood daily, Jeremy Bentham tore up his former plans for educational reform, and was among the visitors (not at Hazelwood, to which he sent an ambassador, but at Bruce Castle). This early period of the Hills' experiment is extremely well documented: later, in the Bruce Castle days, it continued to attract some attention, but was less the rage. The system was further amended, the more eccentric features being dropped: as Arthur Hill said in 1855, his opinions had, over his forty years' experience, gradually modified on many points. The

[1] I must thank Mr. A. W. McClellan, A.L.A., the Director of Libraries and Museum, Borough of Tottenham, and his staff, for their help, and for allowing me to see the Hill Collection at Bruce Castle. Mr. Peter Nixon, a student at Vaughan College, Leicester, has kindly given me much information about Hazelwood. A history of the building is to be found in *Middlesex*, Norman G. Brett James (The County Books) 1951, pp. 167-168: local tradition attributes the foundation of the church (All Hallows, Tottenham) to David of Scotland, who by his marriage with the daughter of Earl Waltheof became lord of the Manor of Tottenham. Near to the church is Bruce Castle, reputed to stand on the site of Waltheof's palace, and owing its name to Robert Bruce, who, like David, became King of Scotland. Oddly enough, one of his rivals, John Balliol, one of the family associated with the famous college at Oxford, also possessed a manor at Tottenham.

Bruce Castle was rebuilt in 1514 by Sir William Compton, who entertained King Henry VIII there and also Henry's sister Margaret, Queen of Scots . . . In 1573 Queen Elizabeth I visited Bruce Castle in one of her many countryhouse tours, and the only part now left of Compton's building is an isolated brick tower.

The Comptons lived at Bruce Castle till 1630, when it passed to Hare, Lord Coleraine, who evidently rebuilt the place in seventeenth-century style. A daughter, born in Italy, of the last Lord Coleraine, inherited the property, but in spite of her marriage to an Englishman the estate escheated to the Crown. It was restored in 1792 and sold, and then in 1827 it became the property of the Hills. When their school was given up in 1891 the Tottenham Council bought the house for a museum and the park for a public recreation ground.

[2] G. B. Hill, " Rowland Hill," *Dictionary of National Biography*.

[3] *The Life of Sir Rowland Hill*, ed. G. B. Hill, 1880, i, 102.

following account of the school describes it, as accurately as possible, as it was in the middle 1840's, when Dickens's first expressions of interest in it occur.

One of the Hill brothers summed up the main features of the family system as:

> " (1) self-government and mutual responsibility; making the school, in fact, an enlightened republic;
> (2) fixed standard of merit instead of competition as a test of success;
> (3) the abolition of all arbitrary punishment (including corporal punishment), for which natural penalties were instituted."[1]

The Hills, like their father, were passionate liberals and democrats, abhorring violence, coercion and tyranny, and they sought to make their schools a training in social and political responsibility, in public spirit and generous feeling. The boys elected representatives to a Committee, to which various administrative and judicial " officers ," chosen from among the boys, were responsible; offences against the school laws were " tried " and punished by the boys themselves, and the teachers very rarely had to exercise their power of veto over these or the many other decisions of the Committee and the Court of Appeal. A complicated mark-system operated in the school, and was—perhaps to an unhealthy extent—a main preoccupation of the boys' lives. Marks were awarded for achievement in school work, for good behaviour, and for performing various offices; these marks paid the " fines " inflicted for offences, but large credit-balances could be exchanged for the privilege of an extra half-holiday. Bankrupt, or particularly naughty, boys might receive sterner punishment—the severest form, said Arthur Hill, was confinement: " but the small room appropriated to this purpose, and dignified by the name of prison, had during this half-year been in use altogether little more than sixty hours."[2] Later, in a pamphlet which has for its motto " Let gentleness my strong enforcement be," he nevertheless makes the somewhat sinister aside, " A free use of the cold bath I have also found advantageous."[3] He seems, however, to have been predominantly gentle. Teachers should not, he said, be satisfied with the mere respect of their pupils, they should seek their love; and he seems to have earned both respect and love. " I do not suppose," wrote his son, many years later, " that there ever was a schoolmaster so much beloved by his pupils."[4] Certainly gross punishments, such as flogging (and that other Public School custom, fagging), were always taboo in Bruce Castle. And, like Dickens's Dr. Strong—and Dr. Arnold of Rugby—Arthur Hill made a point of trusting and believing his boys; they were expected to tell the truth.

The school Committee made and amended, as well as enforced, the laws, and it was also responsible for spending various funds. As much as £100 a year was given it, to purchase books for the library, maps, and scientific equipment. The boys contributed to

[1] Frederick Hill, *An Autobiography*, ed. Constance Hill, 1894, p. 48.
[2] Reported in *Chambers's Edinburgh Journal*, 22nd July 1843.
[3] Arthur Hill, *Hints on the Discipline appropriate to Schools*, 1855, p. 18.
[4] *Letters of George Birkbeck Hill*, ed. Lucy Crump, 1906, p. 7.

a Benevolent Fund—a forerunner of the public schools' Missions —which the Committee also administered; the political sympathies of the school are reflected in the Committee's subscribing £1 each to the Distressed Hungarian Refugees and the Friends of Poland, in 1852—as also in the presence on the staff of a Hungarian master who was formerly Kossuth's secretary.

All this sounds very modern; so do the curriculum and teaching methods. The school was rather reluctantly obliged to keep the Classics the centre of studies, but it was a pioneer in the teaching of more " modern " subjects. As early as 1829, a Science master was appointed. Visitors to the school were impressed by the maps, scientific apparatus and well-equipped laboratory on display. " It may surprise many persons, perhaps," wrote one, " to be informed that efts, frogs, toads, earwigs . . . are preserved and examined by these children with anxious interest . . . Familiar lectures are delivered to them on some of the simplest principles and powers of mechanics; and useful machines, as the pump, for instance, are dissected before them, and their parts and principles of action explained."[1] Other subjects were taught in a " practical " way: geography, for instance, began with the making of a map of the classroom, then of the school, then of the locality, and thus proceeded to the study of the whole world. French was taught by what is now called " the direct method "—as the Hills put it, " in the same manner as a child learns its mother tongue."[2] School dramatics were used as training, both in English enunciation and in the speaking of foreign languages. The Hills were always emphasising that their prior task was to make boys want to learn, and equip their minds for learning, rather than to instruct them and fill them full of facts; and they were willing to bide their time. " It is much more important that a tree should have healthy and vigorous roots, than that it should be stimulated to bear early fruits." " The formation of good habits, and the development of the mental and bodily powers, are of much greater importance than early acquirements."[3] These are typical statements of the Bruce Castle idea; and, significantly, one of the Hills' favourite maxims was Gibbon's remark that " every person has two educations; one he receives from others and one, more important, which he gives to himself."[4]

Every boy at Bruce Castle was given individual attention; great pains were taken to discover his peculiar interests and aptitudes: " the pupil's tastes," wrote Arthur Hill, " are often the true index of his own powers."[5] Boys were not, of course, allowed to drop essential subjects, just because they disliked them or were bad at them, but they were encouraged to specialise, both in school hours and in their free time, on what suited them best. They were grouped separately in classes for every subject; one boy might, thus, be " promoted " in Latin while being " kept down "

[1] Alfred Fry, " The Junior School of Bruce Castle, Tottenham," *Papers of the Central Society of Education*, Second Publication, 1838, pp. 245-6. Cf. Albert Hill, *Seventy-two Years in Tottenham*, 1899, p. 46.

[2] *Sketch of the System of Education, Moral and Intellectual, in Practice at the Schools of Bruce Castle, Tottenham, and Hazelwood, near Birmingham*, 1833, p. 21.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 53, 3.

[4] Quoted by Sir Michael Sadler, *A Nineteenth Century Experiment in Education: the work of Matthew and Rowland Hill*, 1923, p. 7.

[5] *Hints on Discipline*, p. 23.

in mathematics. Prizes and marks were given, not for " beating " one's fellows in free competition, but for attaining a set standard considered appropriate for every boy.

Another important feature of the school was Voluntary Work. The less academic boys were able to earn marks (which their cleverer fellows could gain through their studies) by various kinds of approved voluntary work, done in their free time. Fashions in these optional activities came and went, and one finds, for example, in one *Brucian* " A Plea for Carpentering," which was at that time in a decline; another *Brucian*, of 1850, lists the current favourites:

> " Some boys . . . study Greek, Latin, Italian, or French; others Mathematics, while others again exercise their ingenuity in making Steam Engines, Spring Boats, etc., in the shop, and in manufacturing small cardboard models of railway carriages, coaches, gigs, etc."[1]

These voluntary labours had to be done well; everything was examined, and uncompleted or shoddy work had to be done again.

One sees, then, why Dickens called this " a recognition of education as a broad system of moral and intellectual philosophy": it was all thought out, every activity of the boys was purposive, and many of the school's practices were eminently intelligent. Its greatest strength lay in its moral and social training; its weaknesses were on the intellectual side, in which—as Orwell rightly says—Dickens was always less interested. Arthur Hill had not been to a University, and was not a very good scholar (though his prestige in his profession brought him three times the Vice-Presidency of the College of Preceptors). His son later complained of " the want of accurate knowledge, which too often characterised the lessons," and said that under the Bruce Castle system " doggedness of mind was never attained."[2] He also complained that he was " so surfeited with the Useful that he was beginning to hate it."[3] The Hills were among the founders of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, which—like Bruce Castle—sometimes construed " useful " rather narrowly. The school had the defects of its qualities; the *Spectator*, however, was just in its praise of the system as " the earliest attempt made in England to render education not solely classical and verbal, but real, scientific, and character-forming."[4] One is reminded here of Dickens's support for Miss Coutts's movement for the study of Common Things in schools and colleges, and his contempt for the empty verbalism of Mr. M'Choakumchild's prize-pupil Bitzer. Dickens must also have found congenial the Hills' stress on character-building. Some details of their school organisation might have merited his satire, and the system must have tempted some boys into priggishness and a precocious maturity (in their social, rather than their intellectual, development), but the basic aims of the school were likely to commend themselves to him. Arthur Hill recognised that schools should both form the character and transmit knowledge, but he criticised the general practice of

1 Files of the *Brucian* are available in the British Museum Library, and the Bruce Castle Museum. Unfortunately, both sets are deficient in the 1840's: perhaps the magazine had collapsed temporarily in that period.
2 *Letters of G. B. Hill*, p. 6.
3 *Ibid.*, p. 94.
4 *Spectator*, 21st June 1851, quoted in *The Remains of Thomas Wright Hill*, 1859, p. 144.

teachers in limiting their attention almost entirely to the second of these aims, " and to only certain sections of it, as language and numbers. Resting here, education may be said to stop at its very commencement. The wide domain of general knowledge is scarcely touched upon, and the development and establishment of the moral feelings are altogether overlooked."[1] Dr. Arnold was, in his different way, reforming Rugby in much the same spirit; indeed, most historians of education think it almost certain that Arnold must have learned a good deal from the Hazelwood experiment, which was much in the news just before he became Headmaster. Thus, the disagreement, mentioned above, between Hughes and Mack, as to what kind of school Dickens had in mind when he created Dr. Strong's is not fundamental; there were many features common to the reformed Public Schools and such " new " or " progressive " schools as Bruce Castle.

One may now turn back to, and quote further from, the letter in which Dickens describes Bruce Castle to Macready. First, he wisely questions whether Macready should send his boy there, as he had had such a " very different sort of school experience " elsewhere and was, perhaps, too old to adjust himself to so unusual a school regime. Next he mentions some of the details about Bruce Castle which attracted his attention and met with his approval:

> " I have the paper setting forth the nature of the higher classical studies, and the books they read. It is the usual course, and includes the great books in Greek and Latin. They have a miscellaneous library, under the management of the boys themselves, of some five or six thousand volumes, and every means of study and recreation, and every inducement to self-reliance and self-exertion that can easily be imagined."

Finally, one may remark the similarity between Bruce Castle and Dr. Strong's school (with its kindliness, its freedom, its trusting the boys)—and also how many of the qualities of Bruce Castle are precisely those the opposites of which Dickens satirises in his " bad " schools. Against the individual attention at Bruce Castle, one can set the " girl number twenty ! " attitude in *Hard Times* and Richard Carstone's experience at Winchester (in *Bleak House*) where it had not been " anybody's business to find out what his natural bent was, or where his failings lay, or to adapt any kind of knowledge to *him*." Against the Bruce Castle encouragement of spontaneity and enjoyment of work, one may set the " latest gospel according to monotony " in Bradley Headstone's school in *Our Mutual Friend*; against the kindliness of Arthur Hill, the vicious cruelty of Squeers and Creakle. Lastly, it is interesting to note, Dickens's interest in Bruce Castle appears shortly before his writing of *Dombey and Son*; less than a week after telling Forster of his admiration for Bruce Castle, he was writing to him again, mentioning that Paul's " school ought to be pretty good." Mrs. Pipchin's " child-quelling," and Dr. Blimber's educational hothouse, " in which there was a forcing apparatus incessantly at work," are the exact opposites of the Hills' patient, intelligent and generous-minded experiment.

[1] Reported in *Chambers's Edinburgh Journal*, 22nd July, 1843.

PROBLEMS OF *EDWIN DROOD*

By T. S. Blakeney

THE mystery of Edwin Drood and the identity of Datchery remain as engaging to-day as they ever have been. But I find Mr. Bleifuss's " Re-examination " unsatisfactory, because he is twisting his data to suit a theory.

He says[1] that the book is not a detective story but simply a normal Dickensian novel—a study of the conflict between good and evil. As though nine out of ten detective novels are not just that ! It is fantastic to argue as though Dickens was incapable of introducing new features into his basic design of a novel, especially as we have his own testimony that he had a " very curious and new idea of a plot."

Mr. Bleifuss's arguments are, to my mind, vitiated by the excessive use of " may," " might," and " perhaps," introduced in order to establish his theme. " Forster *might* pretend "; " *perhaps* he inclined "; " *perhaps* Dickens considered "; Dickens " *may* have said "; " *might* have been joking "; and so on. With " may " and " might " you can prove anything.

As for the assumption that Dickens would not spring surprises on us, my fellow-Holmesian, Mr. Brend, has sufficiently disposed of that.

On the crucial point of whether Edwin is dead or not, Mr. Bleifuss, to suit his theory, tries to minimise the first-hand testimony we possess of Dickens's intentions. It is hardly correct to describe Forster, Charles Dickens the younger, Mrs. Perugini and Sir Luke Fildes as only *expressing their belief* that Edwin was killed; they positively assert it. Nor is it true that Dickens's son-in-law, Charles A. Collins, " knew nothing of the plot." as may be seen by turning to *The Dickensian*, October, 1919, p. 196 (reprinted in June, 1955, p. 119), where Collins's letter to Augustin Daly is printed, explaining very clearly that Drood was murdered by Jasper. If we are going to write off as fiction the evidence of the people most closely associated with Dickens's work, and far better placed than we are to know his intentions, then any wild theory about *Edwin Drood* is as valid as the next. To me, Sir Luke Fildes's letter, printed in *The Dickensian*, 1905, p. 319, rings true and convincing; Mr. Bleifuss appears to regard his statement as invention.

Any solution other than that Drood was killed makes nonsense of the story as it develops after the suggestion of his having been murdered has once been raised. If Edwin was alive, then there is no point in Datchery, especially if, as Mr. Bleifuss thinks, Grewgious knows about the matter.

If there is any consistency in the tale, and if good is to triumph over evil (as Mr. Bleifuss desiderates), then Jasper must be brought to book for his ill-doing. If it is murder, then the appearance of a watcher in Cloisterham may be needed. If it is only attempted murder, there is no reason for Datchery; the only real witness would be Edwin, whom Mr. Bleifuss calmly sees leaving England

[1] *The Dickensian*, June, 1954, p. 111.

to make his fortune in Egypt! The case against Jasper would then fail for lack of evidence.

If, on the other hand, Jasper is under an hallucination and *thinks* Edwin is dead, there is no crime, and nothing for Datchery, Tartar and all the others to do, except to clear Neville from ill-founded suspicions, which they can do in a moment by producing Edwin—after which Jasper, presumably, would go, not into the condemned cell Dickens had in mind for him, but into a mental home.

There is very little theme in the story if Drood is not dead, and if he is not, why does he not accuse Jasper of trying to encompass his death? Is he so badly hurt as to be unable to speak? Admittedly, a man who has been half-strangled, perhaps drugged, and/or thrown down a stone stairway, and finally buried in lime "quick enough to eat your bones," might be in a bad way—certainly in no condition to leave England for Egypt. He would be a hospital case, and are we really asked by Mr. Bleifuss to believe that this burnt, bruised, part-strangled patient could have been concealed, even if there was reason for concealment?

Mr. Bleifuss thinks it quite contrary to Dickens's methods, that Edwin should die, as he has done nothing to deserve it: "if someone is killed in his novels, that person has merited destruction."[1] One's confidence in this assertion is destroyed when we find both Nancy and Magwitch quoted as instances of merited destruction. Dickens must turn in his grave, to think that Nancy, whom he portrays feelingly as a penitent sinner who meets her terrible end in a saintly fashion, is regarded as one who deserved all she got. Nor is it wholly true to say that we can tell in advance if a character is destined to die; on Mr. Bleifuss's reasoning, Oliver Twist ought to have died, on the "too good to live" principle; and it is known that Rose Maylie nearly did die.

If Jasper failed, then, as Mr. Charles Williams points out[2], Edwin is the only person who could well be Datchery; and the latter would then, as I have said, be pointless. All Edwin need do is to accuse his uncle of attempted murder, and if he is too ill, get someone to proffer the charge for him, and not leave Neville under a cloud. Why on earth should they dilly-dally six months?

If, however, Drood *is* dead, as the evidence so clearly shows Dickens intended, then Dr. M. R. James[3] may be right in saying that (of the characters known to us) Helena must be Datchery—unless the latter is a quite new character in the story, which is what Professor Henry Jackson came to believe. I think a good deal may be said for either of these contentions, but I do not propose to argue all the pros and cons, since, as Mr. Cuming Walters pointed out years ago in *The Dickensian* (October, 1919), we just go round and round in a circle. I would only urge one consideration on those who, like G. K. Chesterton, feel that it is intrinsically impossible for Helena to be Datchery. It was a common practice for Dickens to project his friends into his novels.

[1] *The Dickensian*, 1954, p. 181.
[2] *Edwin Drood*, World's Classics edn., p. 373.
[3] *Cambridge Review*, 1911, p. 346.

It is said that Ellen Ternan first impressed him when he found her, backstage, in male attire, weeping at having to show so much of her legs. May not this dressing up as a male have suggested to Dickens the idea of Helena Landless also dressing up as a man, just as her very names were suggested to him by Ellen Lawless (Ternan)?

And on the alternative theme, against those who contend that Dickens would never have introduced an important character like Datchery so late in the book (chapter xviii), it may be observed that another important character, Tartar, appears only a page or two earlier. It would, I confess, be rather pleasing if, after the almost incredible ingenuity that has been expended on identifying Datchery, we could find the true answer to be the surprising but simple solution, that Datchery is just Datchery!

What he is doing at Cloïsterham strikes me as at least as great a conundrum as who he is: despite all his chalk marks, his main achievement seems to have been to call attention to himself ("the chartered bore of the city"). Indeed, he makes himself so conspicuous, from the moment he arrives at the Crozier Hotel, that one almost wonders if Dickens had introduced him into the story to distract our attention from someone or something else?

There is, however, one aspect of the Drood story that merits, I think, more attention than it receives. In any crime story (and however much Mr. Bleifuss may dislike it, *Edwin Drood* is such a story, and a detective story—a very successful one, too, since we have been trying to solve it for 85 years!) the two critical considerations are, Motive and Opportunity. So much skill has been spent on the latter factor that the former is apt to be overlooked, and a too-ready acquiescence made in the assumption that Jasper aimed to kill Edwin simply to clear the way to marrying Rosa himself.

Dame Una Pope-Hennessy, *Charles Dickens*, 1945, stresses the point of the mystery of Jasper's motives; and an anonymous writer in *The Cambridge Review* (1912, pp. 116 sqq) observes that if Jasper's motive was simply to marry Rosa, then his consternation (chapter xv) on hearing from Grewgious that Edwin and Rosa had broken their engagement, is not wholly intelligible. The information ought to be agreeable to him—indeed, he acts accordingly in chapter xix—and I suggest we too-easily interpret his fainting before Grewgious as due to horror at the *needlessness* of his crime. He tells the opium woman that it was pleasant to do (chapter xxiii), and he seems to be talking of the deed; and at no time do we see signs of remorse. The Cambridge Reviewer suggests that Jasper's collapse was, rather, at realising the *uselessness* of the crime.

The importance of Grewgious's interview with Jasper is shown in the note Dickens made—"Jasper's failure in the one great object made known by Mr. Grewgious," and the suggestion is that Jasper, as trustee to Edwin (see chapter ix) had ideas of benefiting from the Drood estates (may have already done so), which he would not do if Edwin married. Grewgious only knew Jasper as Edwin's guardian, not as a potential lover of Rosa, who had not as yet told him of it; it is evident that Grewgious had misgivings

about Jasper (he watches him out of the corners of his eyes during the interview) and expects him to be upset.

The idea of a defaulting trustee might have come to Dickens from Wilkie Collins's *The Moonstone* (Godfrey Abelwhite defaults there), and other factors in *Edwin Drood* (the opium, the ring, the mesmerism) all suggest that Dickens had been influenced by Collins's book, published only two years before. Just as in *The Moonstone*, the amateur detective, Franklin Blake, discovers himself to be the thief, through a concealed piece of clothing, so I think Dickens had the idea of Jasper giving himself away by trying to retrieve the tell-tale ring. And just as Franklin Blake had declared that if time and pains could do it, he would lay his hand on the thief, so Jasper (chapter xvi) declares in his diary that he will never relax his search, but will fasten the crime upon the murderer. Dickens's " curious and new idea " would be well served by making Jasper unwittingly reveal himself as the murderer, as was suggested by Montagu Saunders, *The Mystery in the Drood Family* (see also Miss Pakenham, *The Dickensian*, 1955, p. 121).

As for all the other red herrings Dickens has so liberally strewn about the book, they have certainly succeeded, up to date, in keeping us guessing. But I cannot agree with Mr Bleifuss in thinking that particular attention is given to Bazzard, as though he is a major character. I take Bazzard to be one of those innumerable Dickens's characters who have no *essential* rôle, but whom Dickens loved to introduce, particularly when they were connected with the law. It is the care he took over these incidental characters, as well as over the major people, that forms part of the attraction of Dickens's writing. Wemmick is not necessary to *Great Expectations*, nor Mr. Mantalini to *Nicholas Nickleby*, and a dozen others will suggest themselves. We get much more attention paid to Sapsea, Deputy and others, than to Bazzard, and the only certain function of the latter is to witness to the handing over of the ring to Edwin.

RECENT DICKENSIANA

In the Steps of Charles Dickens, William Addison. Rich and Cowan. 15*s*.

Six Great Novelists, Walter Allen. Hamish Hamilton. 10*s*. 6*d*.

Reviews on pages 188-9.

" *Bleak House* in the Contex of 1851," John Butt.

" Dickens and Lewes on Spontaneous Combustion," Gordon S. Haight.

" Dickens and the Hogarth Scandal," K. J. Fielding.

" An added note on Dickens and Miss Havisham," Harry Stone.

Nineteenth Century Fiction, June.

" Dickens and Adult Education," P. A. W. Collins. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, May.

" A note on Dickens and Froebel," P. A. W. Collins. *National Froebel Foundation Bulletin*. June.

FROM GAD'S HILL

For Sale: Owner invites offers for a small oak library table from Dickens's Chalet. Purchased at the Gad's Hill Sale, 1870. Write to Mr. A. H. Watchurst, 28 Brabourn Grove, London, S.E.15. (*Advt.*)

DICKENS'S PARODY OF GRAY'S *ELEGY*

By Herbert W. Starr

IN 1920 *The Dickensian* reproduced the MS. of the first five stanzas of a parody of Gray's *Elegy* written by Dickens. The manuscript of the complete poem, it was pointed out, was in the possession of the Widener Library, Harvard University. *The Dickensian* commented: "It would be interesting to have the whole of this Parody . . . and to learn the inspiration of it and when it was written."[1] Fortunately, both the Widener Library and Mr. Henry C. Dickens have very kindly given me permission to publish the poem, which, to the best of my knowledge, has not been printed in entirety before or noted in the Gray bibliographies.

The poem, apparently unaccompanied by any letter, was sent in an envelope labelled "*Immediate,*" postmarked December 3, 1849, and addressed to "Miss Mary Louisa Boyle./Hon. Richard Watson's/ Rockingham Castle/Northamptonshire." In the lower left-hand corner of the envelope Dickens has written "P. Teazle." The manuscript is in Dickens's handwriting and the stanzas are separated by two short parallel vertical lines, slanting slightly upward from the left to the right. In general it is clearly written but the last two or three words of the second line of the fourth stanza have been so heavily crossed out that it is impossible to read them in my photostat. A revised conclusion to the line has been substituted above them by Dickens. The stanzas are a tribute to Miss Boyle's attractions and refer to the entertainment at Richard Watson's home, Rockingham Castle, which is described by Mr. Johnson in his remarks on the existence of this manuscript at Harvard: "On the last night of his visit there were private theatricals, conjuring by Dickens, and country dances in the great hall lasting until three in the morning. Dickens and Miss Boyle played Sir Peter and Lady Teazle in some scenes from *The School for Scandal* and the scene of the lunatic on the wall making passionate declarations of love to Mrs. Nickleby."[2]

The parody, which becomes serious enough in stanzas eight and nine, runs as follows:

ELEGY.

Written in a country churchyard.

The small dog Spitz has given a shrill bark,
And gone off with her tail uprais'd in air;
I don't know where she's gone, it is so dark,
And (what is more) I don't think that I care.

Now the gloom deepens like to that thick gloom
Of which the Master of the School once spoke,
Which can't be swept away by any broom,
And hangs enshrouding all things, like dense smoke.

1 "The Widener Dickens Collection: An Unpublished Poem by the Novelist," *The Dickensian* XVI (April, 1920), pp. 83-85. A transcription of the five stanzas reproduced in *The Dickensian* appears, with one or two errors, in *The Nonesuch Dickens: Collected Papers* (Bloomsbury, 1937), II, p. 316. Line 10 in this copy reads "Where writing papers . . ." although the words are clearly "winking tapers."

2 Edgar Johnson, *Charles Dickens: His Tragedy and Triumph* (New York, 1952), II, p. 673, *lvii*, n.97.

Within yon Castle Walls, of old admired,
Where winking tapers in the windows doze,
Each to a chamber snug and warm retir'd,
The royst'ring wights of Rockingham repose!

From them no more does Lady Teazle win
graces quaint
Applause, fit tribute to her xxxxxxxxx [illegible]
For them no more Sir Peter daubs his skin
And looks out from a mist of flour and paint.

The modest cheek and mien of "the young man,"
The lunatic in custody next door,
The mirth which Mrs Nickleby began,
No longer interrupt their low-drawn snore.

No more the host, as if he dealt at cards,
Smiling deals lighted candles all about:
No more the Fair (inclusive of the Bard's)
Persist in blowing all the candles out.

No more the Fair prolong the cheerful tread
Of dancing feet until the lights low burn:
No more the host, when they are gone to bed,
Quickly retreats, foreboding their return.

Let not Convention mock the cap and bells
Which certain heads are not too wise to wear,
Nor loftily disdain the voice that tells
How harmless trifling purifies the air!

Full many an impulse, generous and good,
Has sprung from a light heart in cheery hours:
Full many a wounded creature has withstood
The thorns of life, rememb'ring its wild flowers.

And so, may conjurors within that hall
Again large watches cut, from loaves of bread:
Again hot puddings bring, with magic call,
From the hat sacred to a rev'rend head!

For him who, mindful of that honored time,
Does in these lines its artless tale relate,
So read his fate in very feeble rhyme
Written in chalk upon the churchyard [s?]late!

The Epitaph.

Here rests his head upon his native soil
A Youth who lived once, in the public whim:
His death occasion'd by a mortal BOIL,
Which settled on his brain, and settled him.

FOR THE DICKENSIAN'S BOOKSHELF

TOPOGRAPHY AND OTHER MATTERS

By Gwen Major

In the Steps of Charles Dickens, by William Addison, Rich & Cowan, 15s., offers an approach to Dickens by way of his life, comments on the works, but with more emphasis on topography. It is a pleasantly written arm-chair excursion, perhaps offering little that is new to the student, but attractive for the beginner.

References are sadly lacking and there are some highly controversial statements. We read, in reference to Dickens's attendance at public executions, that his protests did "not mean that he was not enjoying himself," and discussing the urban burial grounds described in *Bleak House*, Mr. Addison writes: "This obsession with horrors possessed him to the end, and it is by no means unlikely that it was to placate his conscience for this preoccupation with the macabre, that he acquired such a zeal for reform." And by no means everyone would agree that, "Too much has been made of the blacking factory phase—following in the steps of Dickens, who himself made too much of it."

It would be interesting to have Mr. Addison's authority for the identification of the originals of certain characters. On what authority, for instance, does he state that Miss Newnham, the accepted original of the Old Lady in *Sketches by Boz*, also sat for Miss Havisham? Or that Cap'n Cuttle was founded on Christopher Huffam, though he well may have come out of the Huffam sail-loft.

It is in his main theme, the topographical, that Mr. Addison is most happy: in his descriptions of the London of Dickens's day, with its great river, the juxtaposition of old and new, its sprawling growth, and the proximity of the countryside. He has the right feel of the square mile of the city, and, in the little he says of them, of the city churches. His account of shop lighting and display in the 1820's is very interesting and probably new to most readers, while he comes down heavily and praiseworthily on the pretensions of the so-called "Old Curiosity Shop," in Portsmouth Street. But there are some curious errors: it is Oliver Twist who is said to have tramped the Dover Road instead of David Copperfield, and the sale of the "weskit" is placed in the Old Kent Road instead of Chatham.

The chapters dealing with the country are delightful and the author shows much fairness in presenting the rival claims of various localities to be those described by Dickens. One is therefore all the more surprised at the rejection of Col. Gadd's theories concerning the marsh country of *Great Expectations*. A really careful consideration of these can surely only lead to conviction.

A number of names are mis-spelt, those of Mould, Meagles, Datchery, and the late Mr. Ralph Straus. The illustrations are admirable and there is a helpful "chronology," but the index is poor. References to Dickens's domestic troubles seem unnecessary in a book of this character, but the author's comments are sympathetic and would serve very well in another place.

ONE OF SIX

By Jane Bacon

To their *Six Great . . .* series, which hitherto has included Englishmen, English Women, Explorers, and Inventors, the firm of Hamish Hamilton has now added *Six Great Novelists*, by Walter Allen, 21s.

The writers chosen are: Defoe, Fielding, Scott, Dickens, Stevenson and Conrad and in addition to a brief biography, Mr. Allen sketches the personality and career of each, so that the book (quoting from the jacket) " becomes a short introduction to the English novel as a whole."

These essays, though necessarily brief, are most interesting and instructive and should certainly induce a more intimate acquaintance with the works of all six writers, who are chosen " to represent facets of the whole subject of the novel as a vehicle of creative imagination":—Defoe as the original Novelist, Fielding as critic of Society of his time, Scott as Historian, Stevenson as Story-teller, Conrad as representing modern fiction, " Dickens as Poet." Readers will not take this as alluding to the rhymed couplets appearing in some of the novels—but to the descriptions of character, pictures of the road and English countryside, the stage coach journeys and the ominous note of the coming Mechanical Age, so vividly portrayed in the railway journey in *Dombey and Son*, the book in which Mr. Allen considers Dickens became a great poetic novelist. Carrying the poetic symbol into character drawing, Sairey Gamp is hailed as the most entrancing of Dickens comic characters. " With her," he says, " we soar into the realms of great poetry, and she can be set side by side with Falstaff. *David Copperfield* is regarded as having " a serenity found in no other of Dickens's writings " and the books that followed are dominated by an onslaught of the age; the brooding presence of the debtor prison in *Little Dorrit*, the fog that fills *Bleak House* and the Victorian complacency of Mr. Podsnap and his kind, in *Our Mutual Friend*.

On one point in the biographical notes, the writer's views may be questioned. Writing of Dickens's parents he says . . . " the couple appear in their son's works as Mr. Micawber and Mrs. Nickleby, which is an indication of the lack of respect Dickens felt for them in after life." There is no evidence that Dickens lacked respect in this portrayal. We know he used all outstanding personalities, relatives, friends and acquaintances in his character sketches, and although he may, indeed *must* have been . . . frequently irritated and worried beyond measure with the improvidence of his family, his devotion to his father is recorded when writing to Forster he remarks: " The longer I live, the better man I think him."

We are concerned here only with the Dickens essay and in this Mr. Allen shows much knowledge and a great admiration for the writer, whom he regards as the greatest genius amongst English novelists.

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP

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550		,, Salaries £686 10 0		
275		*Less* Contribution by Dickens House 343 5 0		
	275		343 5 0	
	59	,, Printing and Stationery	46 17 4	
	179	,, General Expenses and Postages	130 12 3	
	613		623 1 7	
222		*Less* Amount charged to *The Dickensian* £241 11 8		
52		Amount charged to Costume Department ... 52 0 0		
	274		293 11 8	
	339			329 9 11
	127	,, *The Dickensian* supplied to Headquarters' Members		118 1 4
	14	,, *The Dickensian* supplied to Branch Secretaries		14 4 8
	21	,, Meetings		31 14 0
	17	,, Contribution to Charitable Purposes Account		14 0 1
	3	,, Depreciation of Library Pictures and Furniture		2 15 0
	96	,, Balance being Excess of Income over Expenditure ...		115 5 8
£617				£625 10 8

1953. £	INCOME.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
	By Subscriptions—		
499	Headquarters' Members	503 13 8	
81	Branches...	84 14 0	
12	,, Interest on Investment of Life Membership Fund, less tax	12 2 0	
			600 9 8
5	,, Interest on Loan to Dickens House		– – –
14	,, Refund of Income Tax		13 19 0
6	,, Interest on Investment, *less* Tax		11 2 0
£617			£625 10 8

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP.

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST DECEMBER, 1954.

1953.	LIABILITIES.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
£			
18	Sundry Creditors		28 0 0
—	*The Dickensian* —		
	Current Account	— — —	
78	*Add* Loss for year	— — —	
		— — —	
	Life Membership Fund—		
575	As at 31st December, 1953		574 17 6
833	Special Reserve		833 7 6
	Costume Department Fund—		
	Balance as at 31st December, 1953	169 4 9	
	Less Excess of Expenditure over Income for year	25 17 10	
169			143 6 11
11	Unexpired Balance of Receipts for Charitable Purposes		11 7 3
	General Purposes Fund—		
	As at 31st December, 1953	34 8 5	
34	*Add* Sundry Income from Functions, Sale of Badges, &c., during year	164 5 9	
			198 14 2
	Income and Expenditure Account—		
	Balance at 31st December, 1953	956 17 11	
	Add Excess of Income over Expenditure for year	115 5 8	
		1072 3 7	
957	*Less* Loss on *The Dickensian*	49 11 7	
			1022 12 0
£2675			£2812 5 4

1953.	ASSETS.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
£			
	Life Membership Fund Investment, at cost—		
575	£549 16*s.* 1*d.* 4% Consolidated Stock		574 17 3
	(Market Value 31st December, 1954, £530 11*s.* 3*d.*)		
	Investment of Special Donation, at cost—		
105	£118 5*s.* 10*d.* 4% Consolidated Stock		105 0 0
	(Market Value, 31st December, 1954, £114 3*s.* 0*d.*)		
	Investment		
550	£576 9*s.* 3*d.* British Gas 3½% Guaranteed Stock 1969/71		550 0 0
	(Market Value 31st December, 1954 £587 19*s.* 10*d.*)		
	Library, Pictures and Furniture (including items exhibited in The Dickens House and Library)	27 3 0	
27	*Less* Depreciation	2 15 0	
			24 8 0
	The Tyrrell Collection of Photographic Negatives,		
75	at cost		75 0 0
	Costume Department—		
	Costumes at Nominal Value	100 0 0	
	Cash in Hands of Assistant Secretary as at 31st December, 1954	43 6 11	
169			143 6 11
	The Dickens House—		
—	Loan Account	— — —	
5	Interest accrued	— — —	
195	Current Account	141 15 0	
			141 15 0
	The Dickensian—		
—	Current Account	108 7 8	
—	*Less* Loss for the year	49 11 7	
			58 16 1
—	Stock of Badges in hand		6 2 5
9	Amounts Paid in Advance		9 9 0
	Balance at Bankers	1136 19 3	
	Less Petty Cash overdrawn	13 8 7	
965			1123 10 8
£2675			£2812 5 4

We have examined the above Balance Sheet with the books and vouchers of The Dickens Fellowship and certify the same to be in accordance therewith.
We have also verified the Investments.

3 York Street, Manchester 2.
5th May, 1955.

(*Signed*) MORRIS, GREGORY & CO.,
Chartered Accountants,
Hon. Auditors.

Brief contributions are invited for this page. *Press cuttings not acceptable.*

St. Pancras

Among other interesting meetings, we were fortunate in having two members to speak to us of their visits abroad—one to South Africa and one to Canada and the U.S.A., and Mr. Greaves drew a large gathering to his recital in November. This was followed by a Bring and Buy Sale, and the proceeds, together with those of a raffle, admission fees from non-members, etc., furnished sufficient funds to send a delegate to the Conference at Blackpool in May. Two or three of our members have visited other Branches to give talks, and among other enjoyable rambles we paid a visit to the Record Office, which is now open on Saturday afternoons, by arrangement, to limited parties. Our usual happy Birthday Dinner was again held at the "Magpie and Stump," Old Bailey.

E.G.V.

Vancouver

The 33rd season of the Vancouver Branch was one of continued interest and success, maintaining a membership of 62 and an attendance of 53 visitors. As a prelude we had the memorable visit of the Editor of *The Dickensian*, Mr. Leslie C. Staples, in mid-September. On the opening night, Mrs. Margaret Brunette of the Vancouver Public Library reviewed the "book of the Year," *Nicholas Nickleby*. In November, Dr. James Parr of the University of British Columbia, gave a very provocative and interesting address on "Charles Dickens and his Works," followed by one in January by the Rev. J. D. Hobden, on "Charles Dickens as Social Reformer." The Annual Birthday Dinner, attended by 73, proved most enjoyable, the principal toast being given by Dr. George Turpin, D.D. "A Talk from *Bleak House*," by E. A. Lucas, a very descriptive visit to England by Mr. Thos. Luckett, sketches by various members, individual and collective, highly appreciated and enjoyable solos by assisting artists, all contributed to a very successful season. The Memorial Service on June 12th at Christ Church Cathedral was attended by 45 members. Plans are in hand for a Summer Meeting at Belcarra Park, on the North Arm of Burrard Inlet, on July 16th. An equally successful 35th season is looked forward to.

Books for Study, Season 1955/6:

The Old Curiosity Shop and *Master Humphrey's Clock.*

The following changes in Hon. Secretaries have taken place, and the Fellowship offers its thanks to those retiring and its best wishes to those appointed. At Preston Mrs. A. Sleddon succeeds Mrs. W. R. Cooper; at Wolverhampton, Mrs. G. Conway succeeds Miss G. Weekes; at Christchurch, N.Z., Miss P. Brunt succeeds Miss E. M. Clague; and at New York, Mrs. Percy Valentine succeeds Miss Clare Peeler.

A warm welcome to Britain is extended to Mrs. Marquet of Auckland, N.Z., Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Fisher of Toronto, and Miss G. Osborne and Miss W. Thomas of Sydney.

We announce with regret the death of Mr. James McCurrach of Chicago, and Mrs. E. N. Jones, of St.Pancras.

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The Dickens Fellowship

LONDON MEETINGS

Unless otherwise stated meetings take place at the Swedenborg Hall, 20/22 Bloomsbury Way, W.C.1, at 7 p.m.

Sept. Sat. 17th. Ramble: "Bevis Marks—Something in the City," conducted by Mr. T. V. Brewer. Meet Monument, 2.30 p.m.

Oct. Thurs. 13th. Opening meeting, Grays Inn Hall. Presidential Address by the Very Revd. W. R. Matthews, K.C.V.O., D.Litt., D.D., the Dean of St. Pauls. "Dickens and the Religious Movements of his Time." Chairman: The Rt Hon. the Earl Jowitt, Past President.

Mon. 24th. 7 p.m. Whist Drive, 13 Brondesbury Road, N.W.6. Tickets, 3*s.*, from Miss M. Beatley of that address.

Sat. 29th. Greater London Fund for the Blind Fête. Seymour Hall, Seymour Place, W.1. 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Nov. Tues. 8th. Lecture: "Suggestive of Coming Wonders." Mr. M. Willson Disher. Chairman: Mr. D. L. Murray.

Sat. 19th. Afternoon visit to The Old Bailey, conducted by Mrs. Jane Bacon. Limited party. Tickets (send stamped addressed envelope) from the Dickens House.

Mon. 21st. Whist Drive (as above).

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP

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